

BINGANG

dec.'74



JOE
SINNOTT

BING-GANG
PRESENTED BY
THE CLUB CROSBY

Vol. XXVI, No. 2

December, 1974

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Membership Dues: \$3.00 per year (Payable to Priscilla Koernig)

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We are affiliated with the Australian Club Crosby and the British Crosby Collector.

Front Cover: Joe Sinnott

The date of your renewal deadline is indicated on your address label. Please submit promptly. An "X" indicates your subscription expired with the last issue and this courtesy copy is the last you will receive.

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Just a few miscellaneous items that I'd like to share with you before posting the December journal.

First of all, I understand that Bing recorded two numbers on Oct. 17th for Ken Barnes. Presumably these were numbers from his recent TV special which will be combined later with further recordings in London for a 1975 LP release. There is also an Amalgamated LP release of Bing and Dick Powell, a "Command Performance" broadcast featuring Bing on the Tulip label, and a new Radiola release (MR-1033, Music Series No. 6, Release No. 33) of the Andrews Sisters which features Bing. Also, if you didn't catch the Longines Symphonette offerings of "The Songs I Love" (6-record set, No. 925486), "Jack Benny's Golden Memories of Radio" (6-record set, No. 952564), and "3 Hours 59 Minutes 51 Seconds with the Marx Bros." (4-record set, No. 931680) they are on sale from Publishers Central Bureau, Dept. 383, 1 Champion Ave., Avenel, New Jersey 07131, for \$9.98 each, plus \$1.00 handling charge per order. Order by catalog numbers cited above.

Member F. B. Wiggins now has the distinction of having the club's most exotic address--Valletta, Malta! Best wishes on your new post!

Here is an interesting letter from member Gene Douglas of Minneapolis:

I'm enjoying the Bingang so much that I just had to stop and express my appreciation--especially after reading that someone didn't appreciate "Tie a Yellow Ribbon" for the wonderful Bing record that it is.

In 1934 Bing said his favorite type of songs were those like "Little Dutch Mill." Now "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" is the same type of song and Bing does truly a wonderful job on it. I like "Love in Bloom," "Here Is My Heart," "My Heart And I," "Without a Word of Warning," "So Do I," "People Will Say We're in Love," etc., etc., but I certainly wouldn't slight "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" for them. If I may do as they're doing in the TV ads these days, Bing's record of "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" makes Perry Como's record look sick--and Perry Como is a mighty fine singer.

I enjoyed that article by the former MGM, and current Sea of Records proprietor. I remember reading at the time that Joan Crawford said that it sounded like Bing sang--the 'thrill' gone. I always remember things about how well she liked Bing but this is the first confirmation I've seen of it in many years.

...I enjoyed the article by Graham Reade very much. I feel that someone who actually went thru being a Bing fan between 1930 and 1932--one who had to take all that hassle--has a much better understanding of what being a Bing Crosby fan is--believe me, I was there.

Thanks again for your wonderful efforts--and thanks to you
Bing for "Tie A Yellow Ribbon."

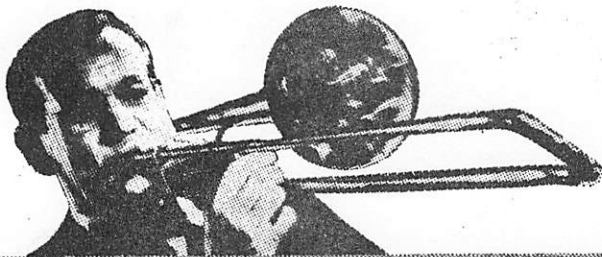
Member John Purches of Australia would like to see a compilation of songs which featured Bing in the lyrics. Here's his nomination for number one: "My Kid's a Crooner." Please send along your favorites.

My Kid's a Crooner

My kid's a crooner
though he's only two he goes boo boo boo boo
boo boo boo
He's got us worried, to doctors we're hurried about his
boo boo boo boo booboo boo boo
I'm really worried 'bout my child's recovery
Yet all the papers say he's a child discovery
Instead of Dadda, he says ha cha cha cha
boo boo boo boo eeny meeny weyyyy
I think I'll write Bing Crosby and ask him what to do
to stop my kid from crooning boo boo boo boo.

Holiday greetings to all of you from "Bingang."

- Pat Sullivan



**"Beautifully done....
puts me right back in
the whole scene again"**

—BENNY GOODMAN

"The definitive work on Glenn Miller"

—BING CROSBY

**"Marvelously personal... Glenn Miller the
man has never been brought into such sharp
focus."**

—HENRY MANCINI

**"Now I feel I know Glenn Miller... a won-
derfully clear picture of him and of the
times."**

—PEGGY LEE

**GLENN
MILLER &
His Orchestra**
by George T. Simon

author of *The Big Bands*
Introduction by Bing Crosby
200 rare and candid photos. \$10

THOMAS Y. CROWELL

REPORT FROM DOWN UNDER

By: Shirley Naylor

Shirley Naylor reporting from Down Under. Wonderful that Bing has recovered from his illness and by the reports from Pat & Priscilla he's taped a TV show. They were privileged to see the studio show & the pre-taping at the Palace Theatre in Hollywood. Goodness, those girls get around and into some of the most delightful Crosby situations.

Was thrilled with the March Bingang newsletter. Firstly, that Pat had decided to stay in the States and not go to Ethiopia as it turned out was for the best. The news about the releases of Bing's discs was very welcome--"Bing & Al," "Bing Crosby on the Air," and "Judy & Bing Together"--all released in Sydney but not here in Orange. One has to practically go down on one's knees to glean any information and, as I have stated, the young ones don't care. Alan Morton sent me "Bing on the Air" from Sydney and Priscilla has sent "Judy & Bing" & "Bing and Al" so am glad that I have such good friends.

I sent Bing a card for his 70th birthday and received a lovely letter from Mexico, also the thank you when he was in the hospital which took 4 months to arrive. The letter is as follows:

Dear Shirley,

I was happy to receive your nice letter and birthday card. It's always good to hear from you.

Your letter was forwarded to me down here in Mexico where I have been for the past six weeks--getting lots of sunshine, playing tennis and getting stronger every day.

Warmest best wishes.

As ever, (Bing Crosby)

There hasn't been very much news or movies of Bing since the last journal. Saturday's Daily Telegraph (14/9/74) had a paragraph about Bing giving up smoking and Kathryn said his new status as a non-smoker was good for the carpet too (my Dad always flicked his ashes on the carpet because he said it kept the silver fish and the moths out) It just doesn't seem possible that after all these years Bing has been smoking we'll see him without his familiar pipe which was his trademark for so many years.

The journal arrived in September and was very good. The snaps are really great and am looking forward to the ones Priscilla took at the TV show. Graham Reade's article was very good and hope it inspires other Aussie fans to write something for future journals. I was very interested in the Midwest Chapter's paragraph on Bing's rarest LP's. Was amazed to read that "High Tor" (mine is a Festival FGL 12-981 Australian) is worth \$50. During 1956 our Sales and Service Section (I work at Email, a subsidiary of West-inghouse) had a list of discs which could be purchased and amongst them was "Old Masters" which turned out to be "High Tor" and which only cost \$2. I never dreamed that one day it would be one of the hardest of Bing's discs to obtain, so lucky me.

This is for Australian members. I bought myself two record holders for 45s(\$2.99 each) and also a 12" LP holder (\$3.99 each) which can be purchased from Martins, 7 Railway Parade Minnamurra N.S.W. 2532. Please mention my name.

After a lot of trouble I finally managed to get a copy of "Road to Hollywood" produced by Ralph Harding, thanks to Alan Morton. This is wonderful to have as it lists all of Bing's films and lovely to have everything under one cover.

Well, as this year draws to a close, so does my first 25 years with the club. I hope the next 25 are as happy as these have been. Would like to wish you all a merry Christmas and all the best for the new year and hope there will be peace throughout the world until next time. Cheerio.

* * * * *

REPORT FROM GREAT BRITAIN

By: Pat Sullivan, Editor

(Editor's note: Pages of interesting information has arrived from Frank but, as it is not in newsletter form, I will attempt to recount Frank's news with the aid of appropriate quotes from his letters)

The most exciting news is that Bing may be going to London this November to record a new album. The record executives flew to the U.S. to see the October 9th telecast with the idea of possibly using one of the numbers in the new album. Here are excerpts from a letter of Oct. 1st received by Frank from Ken Barnes, the producer of the proposed album:

"I am happy to tell you that the project is definitely on. The actual recording dates have yet to be confirmed, but at the time of writing it looks as though the sessions will take place at Chappells Recording Studio (Studio No. 1) on Nov. 25, 26 and 27. These dates, of course, are subject to Bing's actual availability.

Speaking as producer of these sessions, I am naturally pleased to offer admission to a number of Bing's longtime admirers. For reasons of space - and out of consideration for the studio staff and the number of musicians who will be needed on the studio floor - the number of visitors and spectators has got to be limited to only a small number. At the time of writing, I would say right now no more than a dozen at each session, but if I can manage to squeeze in more I'll let you know.

In his recent letter to me, Bing expressed a firm interest in having Britain's Pete Moore do the orchestration for this album. Pete was responsible for the arrangements on the two Mercer LPs which I produced earlier this year - and I can promise you the accompaniments on this coming LP will be superb. Pete and I are flying off to California on Mon., Oct. 7, and will be routing the songs with Bing later in the week - probably on the 10th."

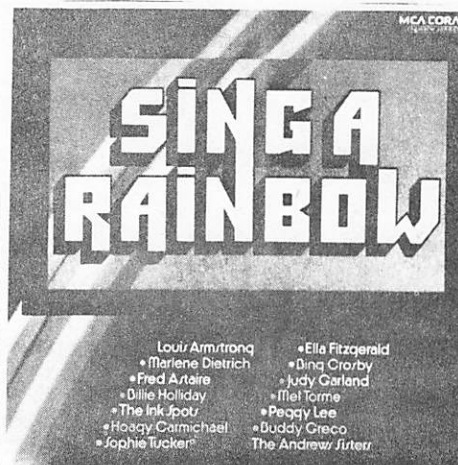
Frank will be one of the favored guests in the recording session and will write us a full account in the next journal.

More good news. The World Record Club is planning a lavish 7-album set for release in summer, 1975. Frank writes: "I will handle orders for Stateside members when the set is issued next year and as soon as I get the titles I'll pass them on - I'm planning a big North East of England campaign to plug the set on its issue via my Bingo club and will be offering a number of the sets as prizes as well as flooding the club with publicity, etc."

EMI/MCA current issues follow. There may be some Christmas material coming through later.



BING CROSBY
BING—A MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY
5 Record Set—£7.36
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CDL 8016

A Lot Of Livin' To Do—Louis Armstrong · Falling In Love Again—Marlene Dietrich · I'm Old Fashioned—Fred Astaire · Them There Eyes—Billie Holiday · If I Didn't Care—Ink Spots · Hong Kong Blues—Hoagy Carmichael · Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree—Andrew Sisters · Sam's Song—Bing Crosby · It's Only A Paper Moon—Ella Fitzgerald · I'm Always Chasing Rainbows—Judy Garland · Blue Skies—Mel Tormé · Baubles, Bangles And Beads—Peggy Lee · Give Me The Simple Life—Buddy Greco · Life Begins At Forty—Sophie Tucker

Cassette TC-CDL 8016

Cartridge 8X-CDL 8016

Another Ken Barnes production is also in the offing - a double album featuring some of the Bing and Buddy Cole tracks. Frank writes: "Including postage the biog set will cost 10 pounds. If "Sing a Rainbow" is required also, members should send their countries equivalent of 12 pounds. Because of postage it will be practical to mail the latter on its own but members should hold fast because of the Ken Barnes issue. I've also asked Ken to speak to Bing about the vast number of great Kraft songs that still await issue."

We are grateful to Frank for keeping us posted on the record news from England which for some time now has represented the vanguard in Bing's recording career.

Bing Crosby

July 11, 1974

TO ALL CLUB OFFICIALS:

Bing is going to work again!

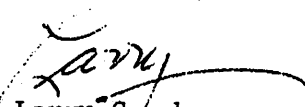
Following a couple months basking in the warm sunshine of Baja in Lower California and business meetings in Guadalajara, Mexico, Bing is fully recovered and will do a one hour television special on CBS to be released probably October 9th.

He will have as his guests Bob Hope, Pearl Bailey, and Sandy Duncan. It will be a variety type show.

He will receive scripts, lyrics and other material for study July 22nd. Rehearsals start July 26th. Pre-recording will be done August 1st to August 3rd, and final taping is August 4th in front of an audience.

Later he will do his annual Christmas show.

Best to all,


Larry Crosby

LC:nb

"BING CROSBY AND HIS FRIENDS" --
a behind-the-scenes report by Pat Sullivan

"Bing Crosby and His Friends" was the name of the telecast aired on CBS on Oct. 9 which marked Bing's first performance since his serious lung surgery. The rehearsals, pre-taping sessions & studio show took place on Aug. 10-11 at the Palace Theatre in Hollywood.

Thanks to Larry Crosby, who graciously invited us, Priscilla and I were there for the entire event--a total of some 15 hours of LIVE Crosby. Except for two one-half hour lunch breaks, Bing was there continuously either performing, rehearsing, watching the other performers, or sitting in the audience chatting with crew & cronies. This was, in short, a fan's dream come true--a high point in my personal Crosby memory book.

When Bing strolled out on stage to record his first number, a great new song about growing old with lyrics tailored especially for him, it was a nervous moment for everyone. First of all, having heard some disturbing rumors about continued ill health, we were concerned over how he would look. Secondly, we were concerned over how he would sound only 8 months after removal of 2-thirds of his lung. The answers came immediately and decisively--Bing couldn't possibly have looked or sounded more super. It was one of those moments of genuine joy, and I recall that I couldn't stop smiling or nudging Priscilla to exclaim again & again--'he looks wonderful!' Bing has gained weight and is heavier than he photographs and, as always, the richness & deepness of the in-person voice is startling. Later in the show Pearl Bailey summed it all up in her inimitable way with the quip, "Bing baby, I swear they didn't take something out of you in that hospital, they put something in!"



Pat Sullivan - Bing Crosby
(Intended as a shot of the three of us, Priscilla was inadvertently cut from the picture by Leo Lynn who snapped this in the Palace lobby)

Many times Bing was draped over a seat in the aisle directly across from us exchanging stories with the producer & crew, and it was almost like seeing a caricature--that's how true to form he was. He was dressed in the most God-awful pair of plaid pants with colors of blue, red, purple, yellow & you name it; green socks; and a golf cap which he removed occasionally to scratch his head--no toupee. He seemed genuinely happy--whistled, danced, broke into song compulsively, and was literally convulsed with laughter several times in antics with Hope.

During rehearsals, Bing is loose, spontaneous, and funnier than Hope. In front of a live audience, it's the reverse. Bing tightens up & follows the script, Bob is all charged up & the ad libs just flow forth. It's a shame that so much of the fun & spirit of the rehearsals is lost in the TV version. You can appreciate the fun Bob had singing "Moonlight becomes you, it goes with your hair, you certainly know the right things to wear" to toupee-less Bing in his plaid pants versus the TV version sung to Bing clad in tuxedo and toupee.

After seeing the show on TV, I had even more disturbing feelings about this matter. I think it was Groucho Marx who recently lamented the passing of the live performance, and I have to add my own small voice to that lament. Perfection was obviously the goal--over 15 hours of rehearsals & pre-tapings to produce a 1 hour telecast! The cost of perfection, however, seems to be the removal of genuine humor. Humor comes essentially from spontaneous quips & muffs--all lavishly present at the pre-taping but "perfected" out of the final production. This trend already dominates our entertainment media so thoroughly that it takes an experience such as we had to recall that radio & early TV was not like that. I think it is a serious loss.

The new songs (recorded effortlessly, by the way, in 2 or 3 run-throughs) were the solo, "It's Time to Start Living," a number with Pearl & Sandy called "Delivery," and the opening & closing theme, "Feels Good." The philosophy in Bing's solo is: "Maybe--if I refuse to grow old, I can stay young till I die." Some of the lyrics are:

"When your best years are yester
the rest are
twice as dear" and
"I've had the troubles and fears
of seventy years
But the only thing I'd trade them for
is seventy more"

Bing had a great deal of trouble getting started in the right key for "Blue of the Night" in the medley number during the live taping & had to be coached from the sidelines. It was frustrating for him because he had reservations on the 9:40 final flight to San Francisco. Bob quipped, "Can you imagine having to stop a show in order to teach him that song--I just can't believe it." Bing received a long standing ovation at the end, and he did miss the plane.

Larry Crosby had invited us as his guests, and he really meant it. He came down to the theatre on Sunday to take us to dinner but when it was obvious that the show would run very late, we changed the plans for a late arrival at his house instead.

Larry is very quiet--the antithesis of Bing in every way. Still not fully recovered from the aftermath of a bout with pneumonia which he suffered about a year ago, the past few years have also brought the death of his wife, their brother Ted, and very recently, their sister Catherine. His house is in the Trousdale Estates area of Beverly Hills. Larry showed us his Rogues Gallery of family pictures on the wall and fixed breakfast for us on Monday morning before we left for the airport. He had had a houseful of guests all week (a niece & her 6 children) who had been sleeping all over the house in sleeping bags through Saturday & for whom Larry was chief cook. Larry still goes to the office every day, does all his own cooking ("Such as it is," he said) and has no servants other than a maid who comes in to clean. Larry reaffirmed our tremendous store of affection for the entire Crosby family, and we pray for his complete return to strength & health.

It was an unreal weekend which flashed by all too quickly but which will never be forgotten. Thanks, Larry. Thanks, Bing.

* * * * *



Host Larry with nephew Nathaniel - photo
courtesy of the Crosby Office

NANCY NELSON - A FAN'S STORY

By Pat Sullivan



Another bonus of our L.A. weekend was meeting Nancy Nelson, who was also a guest of Larry's for the pre-taping session. The entire guest list, by the way, was very small. The theatre had approximately 25 people or less in the audience at any given time and that number included the crew.

Nancy related such an amazing story of her lifelong status as a Crosby fan that we'd like to recount it for "Bingang."

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Nancy was a "blue baby." This usually fatal heart condition meant that she could not expect to survive her childhood. Her life became that of a permanent hospital patient and she "lived" in an oxygen tent, visiting home only 2 or 3 days a year. The radio she kept at her bedside was her introduction to Bing and, at age 11, not yet having learned how to write, she asked her grandmother to write a letter to Bing to request a picture. When received, it became her most prized possession. Listening to Bing and singing along with his records became an all-consuming interest which gave her something to live for. Nancy maintains that the singing strengthened her lungs, and she confounded her doctors by not only surviving but by becoming strong enough to leave the hospital.

Now a resident of Los Angeles, Nancy was hard hit by the fates again about 4 years ago when she began losing her sight. She came to the pre-taping sessions to meet Bing for the first time. She credits him with giving her the motivation to live and Larry Crosby with extending a lifetime of help and encouragement.

Thank you, Nancy, for sharing your courageous story with us.

Bing Crosby

September 12, 1974

Dear Patricia:

I was very happy to see you and Priscilla at the pre-taping sessions and the studio show of the television Special done last month.

I thought it turned out rather well. The material was very good. The writers, particularly Ken and Mitzi Welch, are very clever.

I don't know of any plans to record any of the numbers, Patricia. There might be, after the thing has been on the air and somebody has heard the songs. They might think about it.

Or I might even explore the possibility with some of the recording companies in Los Angeles.

You know, of course, that both Larry and I are grateful for all the things you've done for us in connection with the publication of the semi-annual journal, and I appreciate that it is indeed a chore that involves a great deal of work, and time, and effort.

I've been talking about recording plans with two or three different people. An outfit in England. Sonny Burke of Daybreak Records to do an album of some of the old Southern songs, and there's

also a discussion about doing some of the Broadway show tunes that haven't been kicked around too much. Things by Rodgers and Hart, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Vincent Youmans, George Gershwin, Cole Porter and some of the other great writers.

We'll see if anything develops. I hope so.

I like to get something out every year, and I should get going soon if I'm going to meet this schedule.

Very best wishes to you and all the members -

Most sincerely yours,

Bing
Bing Crosby

BC:lm

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, Monday, Aug. 12, 1974



Bing's back!

Bing Crosby takes a break during rehearsals in Los Angeles for upcoming television special that will mark his return to show business after a year's absence. Crosby underwent lung surgery last January. (AP)

REPORT FROM THE WEST COAST

by Priscilla Koernig

August was quite an exciting month for Pat and me. I'll try not to repeat what Pat has already said. The two weeks before the rehearsal were just as exciting. It's a lot of fun to plan a trip like that. I talked to Larry Crosby a number of times over the phone. He's so nice. I don't know what we'd do without him at the Crosby Office. The taping was postponed a week because Bob Hope had other commitments. Larry invited Pat and me to stay at his house on Sunday night. He had a house full Saturday night, otherwise he would have had us then too. He has a lovely home in the Transdale Estates of Beverly Hills. That is a beautiful area. He moved there a couple of years ago when his wife, Elaine, was unable to get up & down the stairs in their previous 5-bedroom home. Larry lives there by himself and does his own cooking. He made us a delicious breakfast Monday morning.

I managed to get on the same flight in San Francisco that Pat was on from Sacramento to Los Angeles. We arrived in Hollywood around 11:00 and our rented car was waiting for us. We drove to Sunset & Vine, parked & walked across the street to the Hollywood Palace Theatre. Leo Lynn was our host. They were all out to lunch when we arrived, but the guard at the door had our names. We went out and had some lunch ourselves & came back to the theatre around 1:00. We sat in the second row. We were only there a few minutes and there was Bing walking across the stage. Well, like Pat already has said, he just looks tremendous. And when he smiled and danced and whistled between takes, it was like the years had been erased.

We were there until almost 9:00 P.M. when they dismissed Bing and Bob. Sandy Duncan was to do her number then. No reflections on Sandy, as she's a very talented girl, but we left--and you know why! We hadn't had dinner and Pat wanted to take me out for my birthday which was August 8. We found a delicious Italian restaurant in Los Angeles. After dinner, we went to our hotel and went to the top floor to enjoy the view and reminisce about our day. The next day, since we had until 1:00 P.M., we drove around L.A. and vicinity.

We were at the studio Sunday from 1:00 P.M. until 9:45 P.M. During this time, thanks to Leo, we met a very nice lady, Nancy Nelson. That was the first time she had met Bing, although she's been grateful to him since a child (Nancy's story of this long admiration is in this journal). I told Nancy I'd be happy to take her picture with Bing. She was thrilled. She is almost blind because of some doctor's carelessness, but she can see a little if up real close. She phoned me recently to give me her new address and to tell me that through the Braille Institute, she has a job with an auto club.

Sunday at the rehearsal, Bing was busy running backstage to check the Dodgers baseball game & the Masters golf tournament. He kept us posted on the score. I'm a San Francisco Giants fan myself! During the medley of Bing's hits, Sandy was trying to be very dramatic while singing "You're clear out of this world when I'm looking at you." Bing stood there with a grin on his face & it broke Sandy up. She told him to get serious. After this happened a couple of times, the director said something to Sandy. She said, "Will you tell Bing

to stop standing there grinning!. This is my dramatic number and he's standing there grinning!" At one point the director noticed Bing's socks--"Bing, are you wearing green socks?" he said to Bing, who was all dressed up in a tuxedo. "Well, I don't know, I guess they're green!" said colorblind Bing. Director--"Oh no!"*** Bing continued, "Well, anything is permissible these days--anyway, I'm not doing the show for my socks!"

I agree with Pat. The finished show went too fast--and it lost a lot that we saw. Wish everyone of you could have been in Hollywood with us on August 10 and 11. By the way, when I got back to work on Monday, my boss told me that I should have stayed out the whole day. If we'd had more time there, Larry would have shown us around.

My good friends Bessie and Ernie Lund vacationed at the Worlds Fair in Spokane. I suggested they go to the Crosby Library while there. They both came back raving about how nice Father Carroll was to them. He showed them the Crosby Room where all of Bing's trophies, gold records, etc. are located. And he also took them to the vault where there are quite a lot of rare 78s. They are still looking for more, by the way, so if anyone would like to donate any extras to the library, I know Father Carroll would appreciate it. He also mentioned that our club journals are kept in the vault. Bessie and Ernie took quite a few pictures for me and I'm looking forward to seeing them. The only thing they were disappointed in was that they didn't take a picture of Father Carroll. I hope to get there some year soon.

Kathryn has a daily morning talk show on a local TV station. It's on every morning at 9:00 A.M. I was able to see it during my vacation, but otherwise have to miss it because of work. When I've looked at the show, it's been very interesting. She has a different guest each day. One day she had Bing's doctor as a guest, although it wasn't mentioned that he was Bing's doctor. Kathryn did mention that Bing almost gave up singing ten years ago but that people like Bing, Sinatra can't retire--they bring back too many wonderful memories for too many people. She is a marvelous woman and is in such good shape doing all kinds of exercises with Jack LaLanne, ballet with the S.F. ballet, etc. I wish I could watch the show every day, but that's one of the problems of being a working girl! By the way, we missed seeing Bing and Phil Harris as her guests on Friday, Oct. 25, 1974. If anyone saw this and recorded it, please let me know.

We're going to have a good trip to the tournament this year. Pat Sullivan, Matt De Vera are joining us for a few days, and Graham and Margaret Reade from Australia and Bill Osborn from Seattle, Wash. are coming for the whole tournament. We should have a lot of fun.

Received a phone call from a friend and club member, Matt De Vera, on Oct. 12th. His daughter, Carol, had gone to a football game the previous Sunday (Oct. 6th) and discovered Bing was there. She went over and talked to him--and after talking awhile, Bing realized that Matt was the ardent fan with one of his own pipes! Bing had sent Matt one of his pipes a few years ago.

* * * * *

RG

October 21, 1974

Dear Priscilla,

How nice of you to write - and
how special I feel that you want
to hear my shows even though you
are working.

Am glad you saw Bing's special. I
thought it was good, and that he
looked good too.

We will be in Los Angeles for the
first two weeks of November to do
the Christmas Special.

Thank you again for writing. It
is always good to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Crosby
Kathryn Crosby

CRITIC Henry Pleasants—with good and weighty reasons—recently identified Bing Crosby as one of the *The Great American Popular Singers* by including him in his book of that title. It would be presumptuous of me to agree had I not been of the same opinion myself since I was ten—that is to say, twenty-two years ago.

Most people (those of us over thirty, at least) choose either Crosby or Frank Sinatra as the all-time great American pop singer. They are about equal in technique, both have proved themselves excellent dramatic actors (although Crosby is way ahead of Sinatra in acting musical comedy), both have led highly publicized lives, both have been pop idols, and both have retired. But Sinatra came out of retirement when he shouldn't have, and he lacks Crosby's sense of humor. I suppose I always favored Crosby because he didn't take himself too seriously, and I freely admit my prejudice that, with notable exceptions, most of the good songs got written and sung between 1924 and 1935, the period when Crosby invented the profession of crooner. His sense of intimate drama made him the first real singing personality (or the first real singer who had a real personality).

Crosby's appreciation of jazz coincided with the music's adventurous flowering of the Twenties, and he worked with many of the leading artists of the time: Bix Beiderbecke, Paul Whiteman, Don Redman, Duke Ellington, Joe Venuti, and Eddie Lang. Jazz in the Twenties belonged to a limited group of people, most of whom freely crossed or refused to admit there was such a thing as a color line, so Crosby had more than a working knowledge of the great black players of the day. The jazz brotherhood was an informal fraternity, and it is fascinating to speculate about what jam sessions he wound up at and how many times he, along with other notable white musicians working in or passing through New York, found themselves up at Fletcher Henderson's house for a dawn breakfast in Harlem.

Sinatra has often acknowledged that Crosby was his inspirational model. He took the conversational vocal further than Crosby did, and he approached singing (as Henry Pleasants points out) in the *bel canto* manner; Sinatra paid more attention to the beauty of his art than Crosby did. He also worked harder at understanding a song than Crosby did. That is why Sinatra often sounds like he's rubbing the stomach of a song while Crosby is merely combing its hair. But Crosby had an objectivity and an effortlessness based on experience that always eluded Sinatra. Frank Sinatra couldn't sing a mediocre song well. Bing Crosby could; as illustrated in Columbia Special Products' new two-disc set of his early performances, he did it often. Sinatra's comeback in the Fifties was based on carefully selected material, such as in the classic "In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning" album, which allowed Sinatra to portray himself as a lonely tough guy grudgingly confessing that he's human. Crosby, in the meantime, could record such tripe as *Sioux City Sue* and bring it off.

"The Bing Crosby Story—The Early Jazz Years" includes performances from 1928 to 1932, that four-year period in which Crosby invented urban American popular singing.

The release of the collection has apparently been hanging fire for seven years, since the liner notes by Larry Carr (who selected and collated the material) are dated December 20, 1967. Most of the material has long been out of print, and some of it has never before been issued. It takes Crosby through his earliest days, when he was working with the Rhythm Boys as a singer for Paul Whiteman, the leading (and most innovative) big-band leader of the time, and from there on to solo fame. There are moments in the album that are charming because they present the sassy boyishness of a legendary man.

BING CROSBY:

The man who invented American popular singing



Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys:
Bing Crosby, Harry Barris, Al Rinker

Der Bingle's early jazz years in a new Columbia album

Reviewed by Joel Vance

There are also some damned good performances that still stand up, even though they were recorded nearly fifty (!) years ago, and some that are timeless.

Just what Crosby was able to do for a song is demonstrated in *Baby Oh Where Can You Be* (despite its fine title, a mediocre tune), which was recorded in 1929. To prove that the melody isn't much, listen to Fats Waller's piano solo of it recorded in the same year (RCA LPV-562); the tune just isn't there. But add Crosby's vocal and, despite the semi-sappy lyrics, it comes alive, it's believable, he makes it work. His feeling for jazz as a popular music—which it was in the Twenties—is perfectly demonstrated in "Taint So, Honey," "Taint So," recorded with Whiteman's band when the great Bix Beiderbecke was the jazz horn in the brass section. And what Sinatra was able to do ten years later was pioneered by Crosby on *Can't We Be Friends*.

An odd recording date combined Bing with Duke Ellington's orchestra in 1932, when Ellington was winning fame with his lush "jungle" sound. It probably galled the band that the tune assigned to them was *St.*

Louis Blues, by then a weary chestnut, but they performed it with the attack and grace for which Ellington will always be remembered. Crosby's style is not compatible with the Duke's, though, for they were both highly individual artists creating their own art forms. To make matters worse, the tune itself is false; it was a folk melody notated by W. C. Handy in the early 1900's, and he added a bridge in tango style for commerciality's sake. Only Bessie Smith could make a performance of it a work of art. No white singer has yet been able to bring it off, but Crosby comes as close as any of them has. Ellington's band is marvelous, and Crosby is doing his best, with the best of intentions. Two takes are included here; he muffs the lyrics in the first, making it a song about a girl by a girl, but in the second he is more relaxed and so is the band. From a historical point of view, *St. Louis Blues* is probably the most valuable song in the collection because it shows how two great artists make the best of a bad situation.

Crosby's scat vocals appear throughout the album. Many of them have only a kind of period charm and would be dismissable were it not for Crosby's being one of the few white vocalists who would even attempt them with any hope of success. For Bixomaniacs like me, there is a loving tribute to Beiderbecke from the days when he, Crosby, and Lennie Hayton were all members of the Whiteman band. Bix's 1928 derby-hat-mated solo in *Sweet Sue* is recalled—in 1932—by Crosby's scatting and a simply astonishing piano solo by Hayton, who sounds like Bix and Fats Waller at the same time. This song was performed for the sheer joy of it, and it is superb.

Despite its glories, this collection does not contain all of the best early Crosby, some of which is available in "Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra, Featuring Bing Crosby" (Columbia CL 2830), "Paul Whiteman, Volume II" (RCA LPV-570), and "Bing Crosby: Rare Early Recordings, 1929-1933" (Biograph BLP-C13). But as a tribute to and further proof of Crosby's casual, determining genius, "The Bing Crosby Story" is a real treasure.

BING CROSBY: The Bing Crosby Story—The Early Jazz Years, 1928-1932. Bing Crosby (vocals); instrumental accompaniment, including the orchestras of Paul Whiteman, Duke Ellington, Don Redman, the Dorsey Brothers, and Lennie Hayton; the Rhythm Boys; Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang; the Ipana Troubadours; others. *Mississippi Mud; Wa-Da-Da; Taint So, Honey; Taint So; My Suppressed Desire; Makin' Whoopee; I'll Get By; If I Had You; Susanna; Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love; The Spell of the Blues; My Kinda Love; Till We Meet; Louise* (two versions); *I Kiss Your Hand, Madame; Baby Oh Where Can You Be; Can't We Be Friends?; Without a Song; Gay Love; If I Had a Talking Picture of You; After You've Gone; Sweet Sue, Just You; You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me; Livin' in the Sunlight, Lovin' in the Moonlight; St. Louis Blues* (two takes); *How Long Will It Last; My Woman; Paradise; Lord, You Made the Night Too Long; Sweet Georgia Brown; Cabin in the Cotton.* COLUMBIA ® CE2E 201 two discs \$11.96.

MEANWHILE: In case she wonders whatever happened to it, Bing Crosby has donated a handsome world globe, inscribed "With love, Kathryn," to the KQED auction, which starts Saturday. Another goodie: For the right price, Joan Baez offers to sing a recital "for fewer than 35 people." And Western Pacific is donating something you've always wanted — a caboose — and let's see you make a planter out of THAT . . . Speaking of Clan Crosby, Son Nathaniel was stung by a bee at the fourth hole while playing in a B'lingame-Club golf tournament last Sat., but in the best tradition of showbiz, announced to his opponent, Fritz Grau, "I shall continue." The kid almost won the tourney, too, and he's only 11. A potential champ.

Herb Caen - S.F. Chronicle
May 30, 1974

22—San Mateo

THE TIMES

Thursday, Oct. 10, 1974



Bob Foster

BING CAN STILL HANDLE A TUNE AND COMEDY

Bing Crosby is a better singer at 70 than a lot of men are in their 30s. That was proven without a question Wednesday night when Bing presented the first of his specials for this season.

He looked fit; he performed with the same ease that we have known of him for the past umpteen years, and more important he handled his singing chores with the same ease that he did in his long list of motion pictures.

Somebody, in watching the show, commented that Bing doesn't realize his age. That's probably just as well for he goes along as if he were 20 years younger.

If there were any weak spots in his show it was Sandy Duncan's attempt to vocalize. She's a very good dancer, and has a most expressive face, but when it comes to vocalizing she has a long way to go.

Bob Hope arrived on the scene bright and early in the show, having been introduced by Bing as the "Henry Kissinger of Toluca Lake." He and Bing always have fun.

Bing Crosby Quits Pipe-Smoking After His Lung Problems

SPOKANE, Wash. (UPI) — Bing Crosby has given up pipe-smoking because because of lung problems he suffered in January.

That's not the only reason. "It was a nuisance—what a nuisance," Crosby said, Thursday. "All those pipe cleaners and paraphernalia it takes to keep it going."

His wife, Kathryn, said her husband's new status as a non-smoker was "good for the rug, too."

Crosby said he put his pipe aside in January when he underwent surgery for removal of an abscess in his lung.

The couple was here to launch a drive to raise \$6 million for Gonzaga University, Crosby's alma mater.

Chico Enterprise-Record
Sept. 13, 1974

Pearl Bailey, who just last week stood in front of some 42,000 people at the Oakland Coliseum and sang the Star Spangled Banner without any accompaniment, showed up also and although she was only on hand a short time, managed to show the old Bailey professionalism.

Seeing Bing on television is quite a treat. He has limited his appearances and as a result he becomes must viewing when he decides to appear. Of course he, Kathryn and the kids are seen frequently on television doing their orange juice commercials, usually right from the Crosby backyard, but he doesn't often give us a treat like he did Wednesday night.

It has been suggested by a number of people that Bing ought to do a solo show. And stand up there and sing all the old and new goodies he does so well. We'd agree, it would be one of the musical events of the decade. You'd never think that Bing was a hospital patient less than a year ago. He looks fit. This is probably due to those five-mile walks he takes over the golf course near Chapalita in Guadalajara, Mexico.



Norman Mark

Bing Crosby gets back in swing after surgery

By Bob Thomas

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "When the blue of the night meets the gold of the day . . ."



Bing Crosby

Jr., 16; Mary Frances, 14; Nathaniel, 12 — and my wife Kathryn. Doubles, of course."

Bing had just flown down from his home at Hillsborough, near San Francisco, and went immediately into a rehearsal for his Oct. 9 television special for CBS. Sitting at a long

The deep, distinctly American voice sounded just as mellow as ever, even though Bing Crosby had been absent from show business for a year.

Wearing a golf tan and trim at 152 pounds, the 70-year-old Crosby seemed little affected by the surgery that cost him part of his left lung last January.

While the operation didn't affect his singing voice, "I'm still a little stiff. The doctors made a big cut across my back, slicing through the nerves; so I'm still a little numb.

"But my golf game is coming back — I shot a 79 yesterday — and I've been playing tennis with the kids — Harry Lillis

Norman Mark is on assignment.

table in a Vine St. studio, he read through the script with Pearl Bailey, Sandy Duncan and director Marty Pasetta, who recited the lines for the absent Bob Hope.

Others in the cast and production staff marveled as Bing sang effortlessly through a medley of Crosby tunes — "Blue Hawaii," "Sweet Leilani," "Down the Old Ox Road," "Goin' My Way," "In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening," etc.

"Gee, there were a few in there, such as 'Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams,' that I had forgotten I had sung," he remarked afterward.

DURING THE LUNCH break, Crosby talked of the ailment that has kept him out of the entertainment scene.

"It started with a pain in my shoulder, and I thought the old bursitis had come back," he said. "The doctors took X-rays, and they couldn't find anything. That's when I suggested they X-ray my lungs.

"They found a little spot on my left lung about the size of a dime. When they photographed it again, it had grown to the size of a large lemon. They decided to operate right away.

The growth was benign, the doctors found. It was diagnosed as nocardiosis, a rare fungus that infects the lungs through the air. A doctor figured Crosby had picked it up during a trip to Africa and suggested no further trips there.

"But it turned out that the disease is most prevalent in the San Joaquin Valley, and I belong to a duck club there," Crosby added. He is planning another safari to Africa next year.

THE FIRST COUPLE of months after the operation are a dim memory of pain and drugs, he said. Then he started getting his strength back, taking walks in the morning and watching television for diversion.

"Afternoon shows, mostly, such as Merv Griffin and Mike Douglas," he said. "Also, we have channel 9 in San Francisco, which offers public-TV, shows such as Alistair Cooke's America and Masterpiece Theater. I got hooked on Upstairs, Downstairs. 'It's soap opera, but beautifully done.'"

Bing will return to Hollywood for his Christmas special and he plans a couple of guest shots on other shows. He wonders about movies—his last was the "Stagecoach" remake in 1966.

"Moviemakers send me a script now and then," he remarked. "I see that Fred Astaire is doing a part in 'The Towering Inferno.' That's something I'd like to do sort of a cameo.

"Or I might take a full-length part if I could find something I could do."

Meanwhile, he leads the life of the Hillsborough squire, devoting his efforts to conservation and other causes. He has vacationed in Mexico—at his Las Cruces home, on the tip of Baja California, and in Guadalajara, where he golfs and oversees a development he is backing.



Kathy Crosby Reveals: Bing Was Just 5 Days From Death

For the first time, Kathy Crosby reveals that husband Bing was only 5 days from death when surgeons performed emergency lung surgery on him in January. In

an exclusive interview, Kathy confesses her terrible anguish during Bing's illness: "I visualized life without Bing, and it was just empty space."

EXCLUSIVE! Kathy Crosby Reveals for the First Time:

For the first time, beautiful Kathryn Crosby has revealed that her famous husband Bing Crosby was just five days from death when doctors performed emergency surgery on his left lung last January.

"Bing had a disease that's usually fatal when it develops as badly as it did in his lung," Kathryn disclosed. "The doctors are certain he would have died if they hadn't operated when they did."

In an exclusive interview at the Crosbys' luxurious three-story home in San Francisco, the slender actress told *The ENQUIRER*: "It was an anguishing time. But now I can talk about it because I know Bing is completely well again."



LONELY FEELING: Kathy Crosby said she visualized life without Bing and "it was just empty space."

Kathryn, a youthful 40, revealed that her 70-year-old husband's terrifying brush with death has brought new warmth into their happy 16-year marriage — and made both of them aware of how lucky they are to have each other.

"I visualized life without Bing," she said softly, "and it was just empty space. I honestly believe I married the man every woman in the world would like to marry. He absolutely has the most invincible charm of any human being. He is so funny, and he is never boring."

"Usually, though, Bing isn't one to show his emotions. When he's feeling madly in love with me, he takes me hunting and fishing. And his idea of a big love scene is to punch me on the shoulder and say: 'You're okay, kid.'"

"But as he lay in the hospital, quiet and weak, we talked often and became closer. We had many precious moments together during those awful days."

Doctors at first believed Bing had cancer — a possibility which terrified Kathryn. "I knew there was a good chance he might die," she said, "and I just didn't see how I could manage without him."

"On the day of the operation, the children and I went to our church, and the priest said a Mass for our family. Then he went to visit Bing. I tried not to let Bing know how worried I was. So when it came time to leave, I just said 'See you later.'"

"But all the way home I realized that I might be without Bing forever — and it was such a vast feeling of emptiness. I remember thinking all sorts of odd things. I remembered that I didn't have a black suit, and I wondered what to do about the funeral because Bing had said before that he didn't want a service of any kind."

"Then at 2 p.m., the doctors told me he would be

Bing Was Just 5 Days From Death

all right. They said they'd removed a large tumor from his lung — but it wasn't cancer. They said the tumor was caused by a bacterial infection called nocardia, and that he would have died in five days if they hadn't operated."

Within three weeks Bing was home again. "Now he's so fit that I can barely keep up with him on the golf course!" exclaimed Kathryn. She added, however, that Bing has had to retire his famous trademark — his pipe.

"He's given up smoking completely, even his after-dinner cigar. And I'm glad, because I'm allergic to smoke."

Kathryn, who has had three children by Bing, said his illness had another positive side — it resulted in a reconciliation between the singer and his only daughter, Mary Frances, 15, with whom he'd been at odds for a year.

"Mary Frances had been attending school in Mexico," explained Kathryn. "When I'd given her permission to go, I hadn't realized how strongly Bing would disapprove — but for an entire year he never wrote to her, even though she wrote to him every day."

"Then when he was in the hospital, Bing phoned Mary Frances and told her he'd behaved very badly and wanted her to come home. She came right up."

Bing loves his children deeply, said Kathryn, "but his attitude toward them is old-fashioned. He believes in keeping close watch on their behavior."

"And Bing feels very strongly about the sanctity of his home. He doesn't like anyone except really close friends to stay with us. Once he became furious because I allowed three of Mary Frances' friends to spend the night."

"Bing is easygoing and seldom gets angry — but when he does, you'd be surprised how icy those melting blue eyes can become."

The Crosbys lead a quiet home life, Kathryn said, and the family usually spends the evenings watching television, especially ball games. Bing also entertains them with his crooning.

"Around the house Bing sings all the time. We don't need a hi-fi system because listening to him is pleasure enough," said Kathryn.

She paused thoughtfully, reflecting on her life with a show business legend. Then she added: "The past 16 years with Bing have been wonderful."

— ROBERT G. SMITH

The smoke is gone but not the fire

For years a pipe has been as symbolic of Bing Crosby as the mellow strains of "White Christmas."

But that is in the past.

On a visit yesterday to his native Spokane, the Groaner admitted he had given it up.

"Too much trouble, pipe cleaners, paraphernalia and all."

His wife, Kathryn, shown with him, goes along with it.

"Easier on rugs," she says. Neither referred to Crosby's recent lung surgery.

—UPI Photo





Luncheon Honors Famous Alumnus
From left, Mr. and Mrs. Magnuson with the Crosbys.

Crosbys Feted at Luncheon During Short Spokane Visit

By OJ PARSONS

One of the most closely guarded secrets of the year was the luncheon given Thursday by officials at Gonzaga University to honor the school's most illustrious "grad," Bing Crosby, and his wife Kathryn.

Because he could be in town only a few hours to participate in the kick-off of the 2nd Century Fund, an endowment to perpetuate Gonzaga University, the luncheon plans were kept under wraps at the request of Crosby.

"We plan to come back later in the month when the children (Harry, Mary Frances and Nathaniel) have a three-day holiday and we can tour Expo '74 and have time to play some golf, too," Bing told the luncheon guests. "You know, the boys both are beating me now — straight across the board."

The luncheon was arranged so that Gonzaga's greatest benefactor and stalwart supporter and his wife could visit with longtime friends, former classmates, and associates and officials of Gonzaga during the short time they were in Spokane.

The 60 guests arrived at Cataldo House at 11:45 a.m., and the honored couple was escorted in a few minutes later by the Rev. Arthur L. Dussault, S.J. the Very Rev. Richard E. Twohy, S.J., and the Rev. Bernard J. Coughlin, S.J., Gonzaga's 23rd president. On hand to greet the Crosbys was Harry F. Magnuson, chairman of the GU board of trustees, and Mrs. Magnuson.

Wine was served while guests mingled to visit with the couple. Bing was jubilant as he greeted such former classmates as Dr. Ed Fitzgerald, who came from Wallace, Idaho, with Mrs. Fitzgerald

for the event. He stopped to discuss golf and inquire about the course at Hayden Lake with Raymond Flaherty, another classmate, who came with Mrs. Flaherty to the luncheon. Mrs. Ted Crosby, Bing's sister-in-law, attended with Howard Crosby, Bing's nephew.

Father Twohy in his opening remarks said, "Today Bing Crosby's school welcomes Bing back, and we have an unexpected bonus — the lovely Mrs. Crosby, too. We thank you for being here for this important kick-off. No one else can do it like Bing."

Crosby told the guests during his short, humorous talk that, "If I've been successful it's because of the training I received here. I learned some great principles at Gonzaga, and I'm grateful to the school. It's a great thrill for us to be here even for a few minutes and to visit with my friends."

Mrs. Crosby, looking slim and trim in a tailored brown tweed suit and brown sweater, said during the social hour, "This is the first time I have been in Spokane since Bing and I were married, and I am delighted to be here."

"Yes," she said, "We are making plans for a return trip this month, but I can't say for

'WE'LL BE BACK'

Expo Amazes Bing

By JOAN APPLIGATE

Spokesman-Review Staff Writer

Bing Crosby surveyed the Expo '74 fair site from a window in the Opera House Thursday and quietly exclaimed, "And that's old Havermale Island." Then he shook his behatted head in amazement.

Crosby, accompanied by his wife Kathryn, was given a brief tour of the fairgrounds during the couple's short stay in Spokane.

"But we plan to come back to see a lot more of the fair later this month when the children have three days off from school."

Crosby, 71, who calls Spokane his hometown, said, "The changes all over the city are very impressive."

"You know I used to work at the Everyman's Club on Trent cleaning out spittoons when I was going to college. But nothing like this (fair) was envisioned then," he said.

"The fair is magnificent," Crosby said, then pointed to the Great Northern railroad tower on the Expo site. "I used to work over there; that's where I had a law office."

Crosby, who was invited but unable to attend opening day ceremonies of the fair, got his first glimpses of the fairgrounds, starting with the Opera House.

"Look at the size of this stage," he said as fair offi-

cials ticked off statistics.

"You could play basketball here" he said as he walked across the stage.

Then the crooner let loose a couple of "boo boo boos" before "Hey it really bounces right back."

Fair officials pointed out the wide range of talent which has been brought to Spokane as part of the Expo entertainment, including his friend Bob Hope.

"Course, Bob played at the Coliseum," the official said.

"Naturally," said Crosby. "You couldn't let Hope in here. This (Opera House) is for artists."

However, Expo officials were unable to sign Crosby for a performance at the Opera House, although one official said "some dates in October are still open."

Crosby and his wife were presented, in the lobby of the Opera House, gifts from Expo: A Swedish crystal decanter with the Expo logo engraved in 3-D relief and a sterling silver tag stating "Bing Crosby— Expo '74— Sept. 12, 1974"; a pair of Expo

mobius strip cuff links and a pendant and souvenir books for the Crosby children. Washington State's gifts were an engraved pen and pencil set and an ashtray.

Accompanying Crosby and his wife on their Expo tour were Claude Bekins, U.S. commissioner general at Expo; Petr Spurney, general manager for Expo; Luke Williams, chairman of the Washington State Commission for Expo; the Very Rev. Richard E. Twohy, S. J., outgoing president of Gonzaga; the Very Rev. Bernard Coughlin, S. J., newly named GU president, and the Rev. Arthur Dussault, GU vice president.

BING AT EXPO BRIEFLY

Wyoming Points to 'Firsts'

(Also see story, page 20)

By ALDEN CROSS

Spokesman-Review Staff Writer

Wyoming was the honored state and Bing Crosby was a featured guest at Expo '74 Thursday.

Crosby, who grew up in Spokane and attended Gonzaga University, made a brief trip through the fairgrounds with stops at the U.S. Pavilion where he saw the IMAX movie, the Washington State Pavilion and Opera House and the Republic of China Pavilion.

Crosby made his tour riding — of course — in a golf cart.

Gov. Stanley Hathaway led a large delegation of Wyoming officials during the Wyoming State Day at the International

Amphitheater in the cool of the morning.

Taking part in the ceremonies were Joseph Rosenfield as the official Expo representative, U.S. commissioner general Claude Bekins, Gov. Daniel J. Evans and Spokane Mayor David H. Rodgers.

Wyoming was characterized as a state that became concerned with the environment long before the rest of the nation.

It was pointed out that Wyoming had the nation's first national park, first national monument and first national forest. The state also was the first to grant women the right to vote.

Bekins praised Wyoming for getting "deeply involved" in

helping to develop new energy sources and facing environmental problems.

Noting that Wyoming remains "very much like it was" when it became a state, Evans called Wyoming residents people "who have long had an interest in the quality of the environment."

Hathaway returned the praise when he said of the people of Spokane and the state of Washington, "I salute you for what you have done for this state and country (by having Expo)."

Hathaway, smiling, said he always enjoys visiting the state "because I like to catch your salmon — which your governor has always had tied up for me."

Continued from previous page

sure what the exact date will be at this time."

Introduced informally to guests during the social hour by Father Dussault, Mrs. Crosby was seated with Father Twohy during the luncheon, and she kept him busy answering her questions about school matters and Expo.

She said the children now are grown up enough to look after themselves, thus making it possible for her to travel

here with her husband. Yes, she has some career plans which will be revealed soon, she said.

Looking well after his recent illness, Bing in his relaxed manner managed to visit with or meet all the luncheon guests before going to the Crosby Library on the Gonzaga campus and making some other brief stops. The Crosbys left Spokane late in the afternoon.



Gifts Presented to Ex-Spokane

Spurney, left, gives several presents to Crosby Thursday.

Crosby Opens \$6 Million Fund Drive for Gonzaga U

Singer-actor Bing Crosby returned to Gonzaga University Thursday to launch a \$6 million endowment fund drive.

Crosby, a long-time benefactor of the school which he once attended, has accepted the position of honorary chairman of the Second Century Fund Drive, the first such endowment drive in the 87-year history of the private Roman Catholic University.

But he refused to take personal credit for the fund-raising event, saying he was only at Gonzaga for the announcement "as window dressing."

"A lot of people here are going to be working real hard to reach the goal."

"Of course, I'm available and will do anything I can to stimulate the drive," he said.

Funds raised will give Gonzaga the necessary financial support to carry the university into its second century

of service to the community, the state and the nation, Harry F. Magnuson, Wallace, Idaho, chairman of the fund's national steering committee, said.

Magnuson is also chairman of the school's board of trustees.

The \$6 million is expected to alleviate projected financial pressures that are foreseen for the university as it nears its second 100 years.

Funds from the drive, which has been in the planning stages 16 months, will be placed in endowment over a three-year period.

The \$6 million figure was chosen because added revenues of \$500,000 are mandatory to bridge the gap between tuition and the true cost of education, Magnuson said.

Reasonable annual earnings from such an endowment of this size will satisfy this need, he said.

The funds from the drive—which already has \$1.6 million

in its treasure chest—will be professionally invested with only the earnings from the fund being used for Gonzaga's support.

All gifts will remain intact as a perpetual source of endowed income for the university. Magnuson stressed at a press conference in the Crosbyana Room of the Crosby Library on GU's campus.

The earnings from the gifts will be used primarily for scholarships, Jesuit support, library support, the Law School and general needs including both operational and maintenance requirements.

"It's important to the survival of the institution to have a fund like this so Gonzaga's continuing progress in education can be maintained," Magnuson said.

He said the funds will be raised through regular procedures, with all pledges paid off in three years.



Crosby Visits Expo, Gonzaga University

Crosby and wife Kathryn tour fair site, left, speak at Gonzaga Thursday. Crosby's photograph hangs above him at GU. (Reisnauer photos).



Beauty and Aura in the Presence of Mrs. Crosby

By John Stanley

IT IS one thing to be attracted to the beauty and charm of Kathryn Grant Crosby — it is another thing entirely to become the center of her attention, to feel her inquisitive brown eyes scan everything in sight like pieces of delicate radar equipment. You are data which is probed and quickly computed.

When the scanning begins, suddenly that which was simply beautiful and decorative takes on a preciously human substance. Her curiosity and well-attuned senses crackle the air and bring everything about her to life. There is also a kind of gentle smile that tugs at the corners of Kathryn's mouth — as if she knows your deepest secrets. You sense a touch of electricity and can only speculate (examining those flashing eyes and soft-painted mouth) what thoughts are ruminating in that agile mind.

Kathryn is a woman with a public image to maintain, and it is understandable she is guarded — only revealing as much as she wants you to know. Still, she manages to make you feel she is endearing and open, eager to answer all questions (and ask a few of her own along the way). Sometimes the answers seem pat, and she can often be clever, urban and sophisticated without really touching on the subject in question. But you never feel put off. She has refined the art of image maintenance to perfection, and you decide there is another part of this unusual woman that will always remain submerged, only to be known by those dearest to her.

★ ★ ★
KATHRYN CROSBY sits calmly in a corner booth of the Three Greenhorns Restaurant at the Quality Inn, refreshingly dressed in a filmy multi-color dress (pink, green, white) of full-length sleeves, sipping spicy tea which she says has been given the added spice of brandy. Her reddish hair (suitably neat to her features without looking coiffured to death) falls sensuously around her shoulders and seems to flow in slow motion whenever she moves. Her body is lithe as ever. She often looks you squarely in the eye when she speaks, and it is difficult to break away from her gaze. It is a spell she creates — that magical combination of beauty and the aura that goes with being a Mrs. Somebody.

You might also say she is

Mrs. Many Bodies. Since marrying Bing Crosby in 1957, the woman originally known as film actress Kathryn Grant has trained and educated herself in many fields; she spent five years earning her Registered Nurse certificate (having three children in the process); she wrote a book about her life with one of the leading entertainers of the 20th Century; she earned a credential to teach elemen-

tary school and often fills in as substitute; she has continued her acting career with ACT and she has occasionally raised money for charitable organizations. A score of other things could be mentioned but these are the highlights.



KATHRYN GRANT CROSBY

Now Kathryn is embarking on a new phase of show business: hosting her own half-hour variety series Monday through Friday at 9 a.m. on Channel 5. "The Kathryn Crosby Show," which debuts tomorrow morning, has undergone its share of difficulties getting off the ground.

While Kathryn conducted interviews when she was writing a newspaper column back in the 1950's, she realizes interviewing for a TV program requires a totally different approach. She also admits to a lack of experience in the technical aspects of video taping. But these are things she wants to master, and mastering new professions is her specialty.

"San Francisco is the most exciting city in the world," she proclaims, "otherwise Bing and I wouldn't have moved to Hillsborough

11 years ago. I've always wanted to do a show like this, because of all the fascinating people who live here. I want to share the insights of the city with others. I want this show to be fun and early — a way of starting off the day. I want it to be delicious and as honest as I can make it."

Kathryn is searching for a variety of guests — male and female — with emphasis, at least at the moment,

on doctors. "We need to stress health education, and I'd like my series to be a showcase for doctors who can help educate the public. 'Doctors, are you listening?'"

Kathryn says there will be a certain amount of stress on the woman's point of view, although she has never been an active voice for Women's Lib. "We live in an age when the woman has to be more than a housewife or a mother. She must look beyond her roles of the past and decide how she can expand her horizons."

As hard as she's worked to prepare for "The Kathryn Crosby Show," she feels: "I'm seldom satisfied with what I do. I feel I've never really mastered anything as well as I could. So, I keep trying to learn and get better at things."

Does life for Kathryn Crosby become so fragmented and complicated it becomes distressing? "Fragmented, yes, complicated, yes, but distressing, no. You learn to juggle, to handle things as they come, I live my life a day at a time. Each day is precious. I want each day to be full. And of

service to others."

Life breaks down into what Kathryn calls "chunk activities." "I'll spend a great deal of time doing a certain thing — writing a book, acting in a play — then it's finished. I'm free for weeks, perhaps months. That time is spent with my three children. Every year we enjoy three months in Mexico, where I teach the children myself."

Her relationship with Bing, she says, has always been "relaxed." "In fact," she recalls, "the first time we met, he made me feel like a little girl from Texas again. I was interviewing

him for my column. He asked me to dinner — I accepted. I was fascinated by him, but it wasn't love at first sight. The romance grew over the next couple of years. I don't know about love at first sight but I do know there is strong attraction and it was certainly a case of that."

Bing, she claims, has refused to help her in certain situations. "So I've had to learn how to be many things. You have to respect that in a man, because it certainly contributes to the growth of our marriage. Bing is a special man, one of a kind, who would never impose his thoughts on me."

As for Bing's health, following the recent removal of an abscess from his left lung, Kathryn says he just finished his latest TV special, and croons "as never before." "He was coming out of the anaesthesia when he looked up at me and said 'Now about that grouse hunting trip to Scotland' . . . Nothing will ever change that man."

Kathryn tends to look back on her past with a bemused eye. Her upbringing in Texas (mother was a school teacher, father was a supervisor who finally ran for the Senate when he was 75) was a pleasant one under the name Kathryn

Grandstaff. At 15 she had already been proclaimed "Miss Buccaneer Navy" at Corpus Christi, and at 21 she had reached Hollywood.

The struggle to survive as a contract player at Paramount, and later Columbia, was seldom easy (as glamorous as it may have looked) yet she recalls her pictures with nostalgia and fondness. "Operation Mad Ball" was a ball, so was co-starring with Kerwin Mathews in "The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad." Even a low budget Sam Katzman effort "The Night the World Exploded," evokes pleasant memories. One of her favorite films remains "Mister Cory" with Tony Curtis.

Kathryn prefers that you don't ask intimate questions about her and Bing, although she will confess to sleeping in "flannel granny

nightgowns" and "leaving socks with the electric blanket turned to No. 4, even in August. As for the 30-year difference in their ages, the only problem is "keeping up to Bing on the golf course."

There have been a few negative notes in Kathryn's life since marrying Bing. Her proposed series of children's stories didn't work out because "I talk to children just like I talk to adults, which doesn't always work out from a literary point of view." Nor did the duck hunting trips with Bing prove rewarding. "After spending hours in a duck blind in freezing weather, my boots in icy water, I was finally forced to retreat to the cabin and put my feet into the oven to thaw."

Nor do Hollywood producers flock to her door any more, heckoning "with scripts." "Oh, there was one offer," she recalls, "a script which would have allowed me to do something totally new on the screen. All I had to do was take off my clothes."

How will she continue her many activities if she is busy with a five-times-a-week TV series? "It won't be as difficult as it seems. We're taping many of the shows back to back, which means it's really a 'chunk activity' and I'll have time for other things. Just the other day Bing mentioned something about arranging a safari to Africa for my father."

Dwight Newton

Mrs. Bing and her new thing

She is a registered nurse, a substitute school teacher, an author of a book, a professional actress, a great beauty, a mother of three children and the wife of a man celebrated and beloved throughout both hemispheres of this planet.



KATHRYN CROSBY
Weekdays at 9 A.M.

She is worth about \$23 million and next Monday she will begin presiding over her own new "The Kathryn Crosby Show," weekdays, 9 a.m., Channel 5.

Why would a woman with all that love at home and loot in her locker want to take on the mundane, precarious drudgery of a daily local television show? Might as well ask why billionaire Nelson Rockefeller would want to bother being Vice President.

The answer, presumably, is an unquenchable urge to keep, experiencing the kind of happiness once defined by John F. Kennedy: "Happiness is the exercise of one's abilities" . . . Since settling

down in Hillsborough a dozen years ago, Kathryn Crosby has tested, taxed and strengthened her abilities in a wide range of things. Television is her newest thing.

She used to be Olive K. Grandstaff of West Columbia, Texas. There was no way the great state of Texas could tie her down. For 14 years, from age 3 (Splash Down Princess) to age 17 (Queen of the Texas Lions), she spent a great deal of time winning beauty contests. Her future was permanently determined when she became Texas Rodeo Queen in a contest judged by Roy Rogers and Roy's manager, Art Rush.

Art advised her to storm Hollywood and when she did a year or two later Art got her on at Paramount, her name changed to Kathy Grant. Meanwhile, she was writing a column for oil man Glenn McCarthy's string of 20 country newspapers down Texas way.

Right off the bat, Paramount's newest starlet sought an interview with Paramount's Mr. Big — Der Bingle himself, accosting him in his dressing room.

My dear friend Adela Rogers St. Johns recalled the ensuing conversation like so: Bing: "Hello, there. You want something?" Kathy: "An interview." Bing: "Why?" Kathy: "I'm a newspaperwoman." Bing: "Quit kidding. They don't come that pretty." And then they were married — four years later — at Las Vegas, Oct. 24, 1937. Bing was 55, exactly 30 years Kathy's senior.

Kathy lives about a mile from my house but she has never dropped in to borrow a cup of money or anything. They are pretty self-sufficient up there in Bingsville. And busy.

Channel 5 indicates her show will have a magazine concept aimed primarily at women. If the show clicks here it might well be syndicated to Westinghouse stations in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Boston and Baltimore, and ultimately to the world. Being Mrs. Bing is not a disadvantage.

Good luck, Kathryn.

San Francisco Examiner
August 23, 1974

Rhonda Wilcox, who works for 1st Nat'l City Bank, bumped into Bing Crosby in the lobby of 44 Montgomery and blurted, "Aren't you Bill Cosby?" "Well, no," drawled Bing, who is forever drawling, "he's a bit darker." Nevertheless he gave his autograph to Rhonda as she blushed, "I knew who you were, but I just got so excited."

Herb Caen
San Francisco Examiner
October 23, 1974

Good for a giggle

Talking of records being good for a giggle, I have just heard an unissued take of Bing Crosby singing, or shall we say attempting to sing *We're A Couple Of Soldiers, My Baby And Me* recorded on October 25th, 1932 (the day he made *Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?* incidentally, and nothing could be less calculated to induce hearty laughter than that!). He gets through the jaunty chorus, then a verse, and halfway through the repeat chorus, what happened next is probably beyond recall, but he is seized with uncontrollable mirth, and spends the rest of the side trying to suppress his laughter, while Lennie Hayton and his Orchestra continue manfully providing a sober accompaniment until they too succumb at the end and the whole thing ends in a shambles, above which someone implores someone else not to play it back. Now, over forty years later I wonder what it was that was so irrepressibly amusing in the New York studio that day? Also, I wonder why Rudy Vallée finds *There Is A Tavern In The Town* so funny on Victor 24721 and 24739—both contain this—recorded on September 7th, 1934? He too can hardly sing for laughing, but he at least manages to control things and not render the take unfit for issue.

Gramophone Magazine
October, 1974

'Blue Skies,' With Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire, Displayed in a Highly Entertaining Fashion at the Paramount

BLUE SKIES, screen play by Arthur Sheekman, adapted by Allan Scott from an original idea by Irving Berlin; music and lyrics by Mr. Berlin; directed by Stuart Heisler; produced by Sol C. Siegel for Paramount. At the Paramount.

Johnny Adams.....Bing Crosby
Jed Potter.....Fred Astaire
Mary O'Hara.....Joan Caulfield
Tony.....Billy DeWolfe
Nita Nova.....Olga San Juan
Stage manager.....Frank Faylen
Nurse.....Victoria Horne

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

So many screen exercises in the music-album line have been so cluttered up with "biography" that it is a pleasure at last to see one in which a tune-vender's life and his music are not mutually and mawkishly abused. Such a one is the Paramount's current and cheerfully diverting "Blue Skies," which catalogues some songs of Irving Berlin without catalyzing that gentleman's career. And with Fred Astaire and Bing Crosby as its bright particular stars, everyone's probity is honored by it—especially Mr. Berlin's.

There's a lot to be said for any picture in the musical-comedy groove which adheres to the oft-forgotten dictum that a film should be seen as well as heard, that variety and vitality in the visual are the stuff of which musicals are made. And when the evidence of that adherence is so enthusiastically displayed as it is by Messrs. Astaire and Crosby in "Blue Skies," you may depend upon being entertained.

The story? Let's not argue about it. It's a standard and harmless little thing about the casual and genial competition between the song-and-dance men for a girl. One of them very soon gets her, but as he is a rolling stone, his interest is slightly sporadic. On that track, it ambles along. As a plot, it is no more elusive than the peg for "Holiday Inn," in which the two above-mentioned performers and Mr. Berlin's tunes were also combined. And the worst—or the best—to be said for it (you can tolerably take your pick) is that it does have a few soggy moments which are quickly and obligingly dismissed.

But it does serve as adequate hanger for some sparkling and stimulating turns of song, dance and general fancifying to Mr. Berlin's familiar tunes. Best of the lot, for our wampum, is Mr. Astaire's electrifying dance to that ancient and honorable folk-song, "Putting on the Ritz." Turned out in striped pants and top hat, Mr. A. makes his educated feet talk a persuasive language that is thrilling to conjugate. The number ends with some process-screen trickery in which a dozen or so midget Astaires back up the tapping soloist in a beautiful surge of clickety-clicks. If this film is Mr. A.'s swan song, as he has heartlessly announced it will be, then he has climaxed his many years of hoofing with a properly superlative must-see.

And that's not his only contribution. In company with the redoubtable Bing, he doubles in song while that nipper doubles in dance in a comedy gem, written especially for the occasion, entitled "Two Song-and-Dance Men." He also kicks his heels glibly in a fancy production of the torrid

"Heat Wave," and trips through the plot and other numbers with the elasticity of a happy rubber-man.

Naturally, Mr. Crosby, as the rolling-stone character, has his share of the spotlight and holds it with aggressive modesty. He makes something lively, slick and novel of "Cuba," along with Olga San Juan, and groans with his Customary competence a new hit, "You Keep Coming Back Like a Song." Joan Caulfield, the "you" of this ditty, is most lovely and passive as the girl who stands none too seriously or firmly between Crosby and Astaire. And Billy De Wolfe, an obnoxious sort of person, is allowed only once to get too much in the way.

For the rest, there are no less than twenty of Mr. Berlin's melodious tunes jammed here and there onto the sound-track, either as production numbers or incidental bits. And we must say that Robert Emmett Nolan has directed the music as distinctively as Stuart Heisler has directed the actors—or maybe more so. That's why they sound so good. Or maybe it's because they're used as music and not as milestones in somebody's awesome "life."

O 17, 1948, 28:2

WELCOME STRANGER, from a story by Frank Butler; adaptation by Arthur Sheekman and N. Richard Nash; screen play by Mr. Sheekman; directed by Elliott Nugent; produced by Sol C. Siegel for Paramount Pictures. At the Paramount.

Jim Pearson.....Bing Crosby
Trudy.....Joan Caulfield
Dr. Joseph McRory.....Barry Fitzgerald
Emily.....Wanda Hendrix
Bill Walters.....Frank Faylen
Mrs. Gilley.....Elizabeth Patterson
Roy Chesley.....Robert Shayne
Dr. Ronnie Jenks.....Larry Young
Nat Dorkas.....Percy Kilbride
C. J. Chesley.....Charles Dingle
Mort Ekins.....Don Sedgwick

The news most moviegoers must be waiting to hear about the new Bing Crosby-Barry Fitzgerald picture at the Paramount Theatre is, "How does it compare with 'Goin' My Way?'"

Well, it can be said that "Welcome Stranger" is as genial as the day is long—just the kind of picture that is nice to have around, even though it may not prompt one to shout huzzas. While it is not the intention to sell short this amiable comedy-drama about a pair of smalltown medical practitioners, the fact is that "Welcome Stranger" misses by a considerable margin the high mark in entertainment established by its distinguished predecessor.

Comparisons are, at best, invidious, but sometimes they are unavoidable. And certainly Paramount invited such when it consciously determined to capitalize on the phenomenal success of "Go-

THE FILMS OF BING CROSBY Part 8

Reviews from the
New York Times

Pat Sullivan
Compiler

ing My Way" by reuniting Crosby and Fitzgerald under circumstances not too dissimilar in "Welcome Stranger." This time the boys are joined by Hippocratic allegiance rather than ecclesiastical bonds, but the film still tells the story of a young man and his relationship with a crotchety elder.

It is an amusingly contrived story for the most part and gets off to a humorous start through a series of engaging misunderstandings between old Doc McRory, planning his first vacation from the good people of Fallbridge in thirty-five years, and his 'flashily dressed, tune-humming re-

placement. Jim Pearson's breezy mannerisms and the obvious play he makes for the pretty school teacher at a barn dance going-away party for Doc McRory cause the townsfolk to turn on their New England acerbity. And it is not until circumstances cause him to save the old Doc's life by performing an appendectomy with only the "teach" to assist that his medical ability is recognized.

Despite this blatantly melodramatic device and the sentimental circumstance wherein Pearson helps McRory to outwit the Chamber of Commerce president, who would deny him the office of superintendent of the town's first hospital, the light bantering spirit of the film is never lost. Credit for this, no doubt, can be shared by Arthur Sheekman, who wrote the script, and Elliott Nugent,

who directed, but we are inclined to give the lion's share to the Messrs. Crosby and Fitzgerald.

Both tower over the script through sheer personality, and especially is this true in Mr. Crosby's case, for Mr. Sheekman has not invested the character of Jim Pearson with much substance. Mr. Fitzgerald's Doc McRory is a more rounded individual, and he does have some quaintly flavorful dialogue—"blatherskite" is one of his less endearing terms for the young assistant. Joan Caulfield is lovely and competent as the teacher and several lesser roles are well turned out, notably Percy Kilbride's taxi driver and Elizabeth Patterson's housekeeper.

T. M. P.

Ag 7, 1947,

THE EMPEROR WALTZ, written by Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder; directed by Mr. Wilder; produced by Mr. Brackett for Paramount Pictures. At the Music Hall.

Virgil Smith.....	Bing Crosby
Johanna Augusta Franziska.....	Jean Fontaine
Baron Hlenia.....	Roland Culver
Princess Blitotska.....	Lucille Watson
Emperor Franz Joseph.....	Richard Haydn
Chamberlain.....	Harold Vermilyea
Dr. Zwieback.....	Sig Ruman
Archduchess Stephanie.....	Julia Dean
Chauffeur.....	Bert Prival
Proprietress of the inn.....	Alma Macrorie
Chambermaid.....	Roberta Jonay
Obersthofmeister.....	John Goldsworthy

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

Imagine our old friend Bing Crosby as a Yankee at Franz Joseph's court, peddling a new-fangled phonograph and wooing a countess on the side, and you have a thumbnail synopsis of Paramount's "The Emperor Waltz," the light-hearted musical farce-romance which came to the Music Hall yesterday. Picture it all in Technicolor, with the courtiers in flashing uniforms, the ladies in elegant dresses and Bing in an old straw hat, and you have a fair comprehension of the prospect and atmosphere. For "The Emperor Waltz" is a picture which can be characterized in a few words, but which is much more entertaining if you see it from beginning to end.

Not that there's anything staggering in the way of music or plot in this spoof which Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder produced, directed and wrote. A dash of "The Prisoner of Zenda," a twist of old Viennese "corn" and plenty of any "Road"-show nonsense and you have a composite of the plot. Likewise, three musical numbers are the extent of the score—and only one of these items is unfamiliar and new.

But, even so, Brackett and Wilder have made up with casualness and charm—and with a great deal of clever sight-humor—for the meagerness of the idea. And Bing has provided the substance which the farcical bubble may lack. As the corn-fed American salesman whose fox terrier dog runs afoul of the countess' fancy French poodle—and thereby inspires the romance—our boy is his usual delightful and completely unceremonious self, baffled by Hapsburg pomposity and candid in his confidence in love.

Nothing he says is likely to be mistaken for deep philosophy but it all has the sound of observation which lightens the weariness of life. If it's boop-boop-adoing "Santa Lucia" while sculling a Tyrolean lake boat, with the off-hand explanation, "I used to travel for a Venetian-blind company," or merely calling his sweetheart "Honey Countess" in a thoroughly natural way, Bing has the air of a fellow to whom the artificial is a bore.

And Joan Fontaine as the countess makes a beautiful counterpart for his open and genial directness. Icy and lofty at the start, she melts with magnificent acquiescence to his bland importunities of love. Maybe you wouldn't think so, but she turns in a sweet job of farce and frets for her poodle's torn emotions just as gravely as she does for her own. Likewise, Richard Haydn is cute as the emperor and Roland Culver makes a

suavely snobbish courtier, while Sig Ruman is grand as the emperor's vet.

Best of the musical numbers is "Friendly Mountains," a yodel song which Bing ripples over his tonsils while walking down an alpine road, to be answered by magical echoes and a swarm of slap-dancers in the dells. It's a charming, melodious ditty and as cute in its staging as a cuckoo clock. Also amusing is a pick-up of the oldie, "I Kiss Your Hand, Madame," which is used to put the bashful canines—and also the countess—in the mood. Roberta Jonay and Bert Prival skip a lively dance to it, too. And the final romantic number, which Bing sings, "The Kiss in Your Eyes," is a pleasantly sentimental re-write on Heuberger's "Chambre Separée."

Set against gorgeous mountain scenery and richly palatial rooms, "The Emperor Waltz" is a project which should turn the blue Danube to twinkling gold.

Je 18, 1948, 19:2

ROAD TO RIO, story and screenplay by Edmund Beloin and Jack Rose; new songs by Johnny Burke and James Van Heusen; dances staged by Bernard Pearce and Billy Daniels; directed by Norman Z. McLeod; produced by Daniel Dare for Paramount.

Scat Sweeney.....	Bing Crosby
Hot Lips Barton.....	Bob Hope
Lucia Maria De Andrade.....	Dorothy Lamour
Catherine Wall.....	Gale Sondergaard
Trigger.....	Frank Faylen
Tony.....	Joseph Vitale
Rodriguez.....	Frank Puglia
Cardoso.....	Nestor Palma
Johnson.....	Robert Barrat
The Stone-Barton Puppeteers.....	
The Carola Boys.....	
Cavalry Captain.....	Jerry Colonna
Three Musicians.....	The Wierre Brothers
The Andrews Sisters.....	Themselves

With Bing Crosby and Bob Hope on the tramp again in "Road to Rio," recklessly scattering jokes and rescuing perennial girl friend Dorothy Lamour from dangerous hypnotic trances, there's fun to be had at the Paramount. Maybe this is not the funniest picture ever made; maybe it is not even quite as rewarding as some of those earlier journeys, but there are patches in this crazy quilt that are as good and, perhaps, even better than anything the boys have done before. They are traversing more of a rollercoaster highway than usual this time and so there are some tedious uphill pulls when the huffing and puffing is excessive and the results negligible. However, when they reach the top "Road to Rio" is irresistible.

Hope reluctantly doing a high-wire bicycle act and wrecking a carnival in the process, or being unceremoniously hung up as a side of ham in a ship's refrigerator, or blowing musical bubbles out of a trumpet in a Rio de Janeiro night club may sound silly in cold print, but it's the kind of stuff that gets laughs on the screen. And, naturally, Crosby, the smoothest straight man in the business today, is in there all the time getting situations started and feeding jokes to his pal when he doesn't actually steal the play by adding a snapper to a snapper.

This mad caper is climaxed by a wild round of excitement at an ultra-lavish wedding party, when the boys bravely move in to rescue the dazed Miss Lamour from being duped into marriage by swindlers posing as friends. If this synopsis sounds sketchy, it's only because the story doesn't matter anyway. For the script merely serves as a means for getting a pair of impecunious musicians driven out of one state after another by irate husbands and boy friends until they are cornered, forced to stow-away on a Rio bound steamer and meet up with a beautiful senorita and her problems. All that matters really is that "Road to Rio" is fairly well loaded with laughs.

T. M. P.

F 19, 1948, 29:3

A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT, screen play by Edmund Beloin, based on the novel by Mark Twain; directed by Tay Garnett; produced by Robert Fellows for Paramount Pictures. At the Music Hall.

Hank Martin.....	Bing Crosby
Sir Savanore.....	William Bendix
King Arthur.....	Sir Cedric Hardwicke
Alisande La Carteloise.....	Rhonda Fleming
Merlin.....	Murvyn Vye
Morgan Le Fay.....	Virginia Field
Sir Lancelot.....	Henry Wilcoxon
Sir Galahad.....	Richard Webb
Sir Legris.....	Joseph Vitale
High Executioner.....	Alan Napier
Lady Pendoloe.....	Julia Faye

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

The solid, reliable humors of Mark Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," which have already done yeoman service in two films and a Broadway musical show, have been given another going over—with eminently satisfactory results—in Paramount's new film of the same title, which came to the Music Hall yesterday. And for this we can thank Bing Crosby, primarily and above all, because it is Bing in the role of the Yankee who gives this film its particular charm.

As the bumbling Connecticut blacksmith who gets an untimely bump on the head and fancies himself transported, rather rudely, to King Arthur's ancient court, Bing picks up this travesty on history and gives it his own characteristic stamp, just as Will Rogers did the

same thing some eighteen years ago.

Not that he isn't supported by a competent script and cast. Edmund Beloin has got a funny screen play out of Mark Twain's fantastic tale and he has added a good many touches of contemporary spoof. For instance, the best laugh in the picture is recorded when King Arthur shouts at his trumpeting herald, "Stop the music!" There's one that brings down the house.

And the people who play the various varlets, knights-in-armor and ladies-in-waiting around the court chip in unquestioned contributions. Sir Cedric Hardwicke is particularly droll as a drizzle-faced, rummy-nosed King Arthur who is slightly deficient in the head, and William Bendix is broadly comic as the lummox assigned to serve as squire. Murvyn Vye is hugely malevolent as Merlin, the villain in the court; Rhonda Fleming makes a beautiful cause for romance and Henry Wilcoxon plays a dark and stormy knight.

Indeed, even Jimmy Van Heusen and Johnny Burke have contributed some songs which, although they aren't up to the classics of Rodgers and Hart, are obviously suited to be sung. And a fair Technicolor production doesn't hurt matters in the least.

But it is still Bing's delightful personality, his mild surprises and sweet serenities, and his casual way of handling dialogue that makes this burlesque a success. No one in current operation could qualify, we are sure, to play the Connecticut Yankee the way the old Groaner does.

Whether it's snapping fire from matches to show his magical powers or jousting in cowboy fashion with an armored horseman, he is coolly confident. The old and familiar Crosby candor is forever on display. "If there were aught I could do to save thee—" a friend tells him in the dungeon cell, while the Yankee is waiting execution. "Well, ain't there aught?" the indignant Bing replies. And one episode in which he teaches a sixth-century orchestra how to play is musically delicious. "Putteth in the brass and taketh out the lead," he says.

Best of the musical numbers is "Once and for Always," which Bing sings, along with the lovely Miss Fleming. But "Busy Doing Nothing," kicked around by Bing, Mr. Bendix and Sir Cedric, is a pleasantly sportive air, and Miss Fleming's "When Is Sometime"

won't make anyone mad.

Mr. Crosby's "Connecticut Yankee" is that good time to be had by all.

Ap 8, 1949, 31:2

TOP O' THE MORNING, screen play by Edmund Beloin and Richard Breen; directed by David Miller; produced by Robert L. Welch for Paramount Pictures. At the Paramount.
Joe Mulqueen.....Bing Crosby
Conn McNaughton.....Ann Blyth
Officer Brian McNaughton.....Barry Fitzgerald
Hushie Devine.....Hume Cronyn
Biddy O'Devlin.....Eileen Crowe
Inspector Fallon.....John McIntire
Cormac Gillespie.....Tudor Owen
Pearse O'Neill.....Jimmy Hunt
Edwin Livesley.....Morgan Farley
E. L. Larkin.....John Eldredge
Dowdler.....John (Skin) Miller
Villare Gossip.....John Costello
Clart O'Brian.....Dick Ryan
Boys.....Bernard Cauley
Paul Connolly, John O'Brien
Caretaker.....Gus Tallon
Maid.....Mary Field

By BOSLEY CROWTHER

All things being considered, especially the memorable success of Paramount's "Welcome Stranger" and its incomparable "Going My Way," it naturally stood to reason that Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald would eventually drift together in another sentimental comedy. And it was almost as certain to turn out as one of Biddy O'Devlin's prophecies that this highly potent encounter should occur in an Irish locale. After all, Ireland is a region which no studio can too long avoid, and Mr. Fitzgerald has a nature which fits rather snugly with that scene.

Paramount plainly had no interest in resisting the spur of destiny. "Top o' the Morning," the inevitable, opened at the Paramount Theatre yesterday. And all those band-wagon Hibernians who like to picture Ireland as a land of eloquent talk and superstitions, bright-eyed colleens and Mr. Fitzgeralds, plus a great lot of singing and dancing, should find it entirely to their taste.

For a couple of Paramount's wandering minstrels, Edmund Beloin and Richard Breen, have fashioned a story for it which drops all the elements in place, and a fine cast of light-hearted people have

talked it and played it cheerfully. The story is that someone has stolen the Blarney Stone and an American insurance investigator has been sent to find out who. (Obviously this doesn't stand to reason, but what's that got to do with the price of ale?)

In Ireland, this lightly snooping fellow—who is Mr. Crosby, of course—encounters a highly suspicious elder member of the Civil Guard, a delightfully foolish old codger, whom, naturally, Mr. Fitzgerald plays. But, more intriguing to his romantic interest, he encounters the latter's daughter and Biddy O'Devlin's dark predictions about a stranger who will come from the land's end and will first appear at the stream of Donal-a-Durrus with a sword the color of blood.

Well, let's allow that the sorcery is a little bit on the sticky side and that it leads to a helter-skelter climax which is quite as mystifying as some of Biddy's brogue. Let's allow, too, that the pay-off is reached through a grinding run downhill and that a lot of mangled shamrocks and tarnished emeralds are left by the way.

Nevertheless, Mr. Crosby wends a happy and comfortable course through the whole incredible proceedings, taking complacently in stride the fitful abuse of Mr. Fitzgerald and the romantic rue of Ann Blyth. As a matter of fact, his disposition toward the local concern with the occult is the one blithesome factor in the picture which makes this pretension tolerable. And his natural way with a wise-crack brightens many a darkening spot.

Likewise, Mr. Fitzgerald is deliciously humorous in his busy displays of self-importance and police authority. And, of course, he is simply stunning when he comes within range of a pint of ale. His weaker moments in this picture are when his countenance shapes a sluice for tears and when he has to slide into the background as part of the atmosphere. But Miss Blyth's light and cheerful person is generally somewhere nearby to help Mr. Crosby keep the picture from becoming utterly maudlin and banal.

As the little Blarney-blessed maiden who listens raptly to prediction and love, Miss Blyth has a happy facility for playing right along with Bing. Her smile and her demure demeanor turneth away many a mocking laugh, and she pleasantly feeds the great man

openings for highly chucklesome gags. As Mr. Fitzgerald's dull assistant, Hume Cronyn is profitable, too, and Eileen Crowe, Jimmy Hunt and Morgan Farley are pat in other Irish roles.

The songs—of which, naturally, there are several—run pretty much to the old airs, with Bing and collaborators warbling "Beautiful Kitty" and "The Donovans" most aptly. The title song, "Top o' the Morning," and "You're in Love With Someone," both new, are adequate to the occasion—which is adequate, in turn, to a lot of fun.

S 1, 1949, 25:2

What About the 50's ?

by Graham Reade

Bing Crosby made a lot of good records for Decca in the 50's and surprisingly, very few of them have been re-issued on LP. Perhaps one reason could be that they didn't sell well enough when they were originally issued. Music at the time was undergoing a change. We were growing tired of songs like "How Much is that Doggy in the Window", "Cry", and "Pittsburgh Pennsylvania" which had been topping the hit parades, and were looking around for something new, something more vital. Eventually Elvis Presley helped to fill this void, paving the way for Sinatra. But in the meantime Bing Crosby was recording a lot of good songs that weren't getting much airplay or selling a lot of copies.

I think he realised what was happening and was consciously trying to pick better and more interesting songs. He seemed to be singing more and more of the philosophical songs from Broadway shows by Rodgers, Weill, Bernstein and others, and songs like "My Own Bit of Land", a homely, folksy ballad about a man who wanted his own bit of land by the sea. It was actually recorded in December 1949 and somehow, seems to epitomise the kind of songs we were going to be hearing more and more of in the 50's, 60's and 70's, and Bing sings it well.

More and more songs like this were being written now and Bing seemed to show an affinity for them. Among others were "The River", "Tenderfoot" and "Ohio", three of the finest records he ever made.

Then we can't forget the love songs. There was a whole new breed of love songs being written and Bing sang his fair share of them. Lovely, sentimental little songs like "This is the Time", "Sentimental Music", "I've Never Been in Love Before", "More I Cannot Wish You", "Anytown is Paris When You're Young", "We All Have a Song in Our Hearts", "Rosaleen", "There's Music in You", "Quiet Girl", from the same session as "Ohio", and once again essential Crosby, "Walk Me By the River", "Oh Tell Me Why", "Gigi", probably the loveliest version of this song recorded, "Spring Fever" and numerous others. Incidentally "Spring Fever" has never been issued commercially, and yet, is superb Bing. Why it has never been released is beyond me. We are told it was going to be used in the film "Just for You" but was dropped and thereby relegated to the list of forgotten songs and records.

None of the titles mentioned have ever been re-issued on LP. And the list can go on and on. There are the sessions he did with Tommy Dorsey and Les Brown, the Irving Berlin songs from "Call Me Madam" and so on.

An LP from this era that deserves re-issue is the soundtrack from "High Tor" with Julie Andrews. This has a lovely score with some fine songs by Maxwell Anderson and Arthur Schwartz, which for some unknown reason, never caught on in 1956. But, I think, if it were presented again today, the reception given, might be a little different. Bing certainly seemed to enjoy singing the songs and he remembers them well, particularly "A Little Love, a Little While".

Yes, the 50's were certainly good Crosby years, full of good recordings that prove his prowess as a singer.

Perhaps Bing was over-shadowed in the 50's by the Sinatra publicity machine and people forgot he had been making records like "The River", "Gigi", "Quiet Girl" and "Ohio", that equal and perhaps surpass, anything Sinatra has ever made. Sinatra is undoubtedly one of the great singers, I don't deny that. But let us be objective and listen again to the Crosby of the 50's. I think he really matured as a singer in the 50's. I suppose some would say, it was Dixie's death or perhaps Kathryn's influence, and it may well have been. He seemed to sing with more feeling, giving more emphasis to the lyrics and accentuating his sense of rhythm, the sense of rhythm which Sinatra has never been able to equal. Crosby flows, Sinatra jogs along. And perhaps it wasn't only the Sinatra publicity machine either. People couldn't forget the personality of Bing Crosby, the entertainer, actor, sportsman and family man. It over-shadowed everything he did. Perhaps it is time we started listening to Bing Crosby the singer again. Dig out your records of "The River" or "Quiet Girl" and listen to a singer at his peak.

PLAN TO ATTEND

34th



BING CROSBY

NATIONAL

PRO-AMATEUR

PEBBLE BEACH-CALIFORNIA

Jan. 20 thru Jan. 26, 1975

REVIEW OF THE BING CROSBY TV SPECIAL - Oct. 9, 1974
by Bill Osborn, Seattle, Wash.

Bing's first TV special of the new 1974-75 season was aired on Oct. 9, 1974 over CBS. It was titled "Bing Crosby and His Friends."

For many of us it was a time of apprehension. Bing, only a few short months ago, had undergone major surgery & a portion of one lung had been removed. He had lost considerable weight and, understandably, had been seriously weakened by the ordeal. Would Bing be greatly changed? Would his voice be affected? Would his appearance be different?

Bing set our fears at rest almost as soon as he appeared on camera. His opening solo--"Feels Good"--showed his voice still has that unmistakable Crosby sound. He looked great & appeared to thoroughly enjoy every moment he was on stage. He seemed at home, and well he might, as the complete show was done at the Palace Theatre. That's the same theatre where Bing appeared, over a span of six years, hosting many of the Hollywood Palace shows.

The old groaner had as guests, Bob Hope, Pearl Bailey & Sandy Duncan. All three worked solo & with Bing to give the show class, casualness and, above all, entertainment.

There were three new songs written for this show & all had merit. One of them--"Feels Good"--was sung by Bing as an opening & closing theme. Bob, Pearl & Sandy also joined Mr. C on this number. "Delivery" gave Sandy, Pearl & Bing a chance to extoll vocally the groaner's unique way with a song. Lastly, Bing did a solo on "Time to Start Living." The words were excellent & most appropos to Bing's current station in life.



"A Salute to Vaudeville" sketch gave Pearly Mae a chance to sing & hoof up a storm to "After You've Gone." Following this, Miss Duncan sang "I'm a Brass Band" & gave out with an exhibition of dancing that must have been a surprise to most viewers. She's very good. Bob Hope did a "Hubert the Wonder Fly" routine & was joined on stage by Bing for a comedy & dance bit. It got a lot of laughs.

The grand finale was a tribute to Bing & a few of the many hit numbers he has introduced over the years. The four combined to touch on 22 of these songs. Just to name a few, these were "Sweet Leilani," "I Surrender Dear," "Mississippi Mud," "Down the Old Ox Road," "Pennies From Heaven" & one that maybe you had forgotten-- "White Christmas."

The show was well paced - the material was original - the guests obviously enjoyed themselves and - best of all - our Bing was back and in great form. We never needed to have worried.

A great line that wasn't included in the filmed show, but brought the house down at rehearsal, was ad libbed by Pearl Bailey. She summed it up in her inimitable way with the quip, "Bing baby, I swear they didn't take something out of you in that hospital, they put something in."

Amen.

* * * * *

STEVE MASON "THE
CROONER"

"The one question that I am asked most today, especially by those of the younger generation, is "what is a crooner?" My answer is that crooning is a strict adherence to the melody in any of the more romantic and sentimental ballads. The art of crooning, or of being a crooner, doesn't necessarily belong to a bygone era. There are many modern songs that can be sung in the crooning style, just as readily as those that were popularized by Crosby and Columbo forty years ago."

Where did it all start? - Steve recalls the first influence on his career as a crooner: "It was Bing Crosby, who I first heard when I was about ten years old. His voice really inspired me and I knew then that if I was going to go into show business, or rather into the singing business, it would be as a crooner. This deep interest in Bing and his records eventually led me to start to listen to the recordings of Russ Columbo, who began his career around the same time as Bing.

I suppose that in a strict sense of the word Russ was more of a crooner than Bing. Russ specialized in singing in just one style, that is ballads, which he did with much more intimate and romantic intonation than Bing. Bing had started out as what was called then, in the late '20s, as a jazz singer. He never really limited himself exclusively to crooning, but extended his efforts to the blues and a lot of the so-called pop or novelty tunes of the day, as he did throughout his entire career and still does today.

Besides ballads, I've always found audiences to be receptive to the Dixieland 'classics' that I've kept in my repertoire through the years. I usually feature at least one Dixieland medley at each performance. As an introduction to the medley I generally recall the many years that I spent singing along New York's legendary 52nd street, where swing music and Dixieland and the blues were almost a 'way of life' for an entertainer. The experiences of those years from the late-30s till the early 50s on Swing Street probably were the greatest single influence on my career aside from the early inspiration that I received from Bing and Russ.

In recent years I've taken on a lot of one night engagements and have devoted much time to television and radio work, as well as putting a lot of effort in recording work and producing records.

I've gotten a great amount of personal satisfaction from my work as a crooner and through the years have always tried to put into each performance the best that was within me. Singing is probably not what we could call a great art. However, just to know that I've contributed in some small way to the happiness of others has been and will continue to be a constant source of inspiration."

Steve Mason currently has two albums available on Decatur Records. "The Crooner" (#DSA 1004) features the distinctive Mason delivery on twelve "songs that made hearts flutter in the '20s and '30s." Album #DSA 1005 "Steve Mason sings Crosby and Columbo" is Steve's tribute to Bing Crosby and Russ Columbo and the songs that they helped popularize during the halcyon days of crooning in the early 1930s.

As a special offer to members of the American Crosby Club, the albums may be ordered for $\frac{1}{2}$ price (\$3.00 each postpaid) directly from Decatur Records, 2716 Decatur Avenue, Bronx, New York 10458.

* * * * *

*****IMPORTANT*****

*****DUE TO CONTINUED COST OF PAPER, ETC., WE REGRET VERY MUCH THAT WE MUST RAISE THE CLUB DUES TO U.S. \$4.00 PER YEAR*****

*****IMPORTANT*****

*****STARTING WITH THE NEXT ISSUE IN 1976, WE WILL BE PUBLISHING OUR BINGANG JOURNALS IN MARCH AND SEPTEMBER, IN ORDER TO TRY TO BRING YOU MORE UP TO DATE NEWS. PLEASE HAVE ALL YOUR ARTICLES TO PAT NO LATER THAN JANUARY 31, 1976.*****

*****IMPORTANT*****

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THE RUSS COLUMBO STORY : : : Two hour documentary musical/dramatic program dedicated to the life and music of the legendary crooner. The program includes more than two dozen vocal recordings and film sound-track recordings by Russ Columbo. Available on a long-play reel tape or cassette \$10.00 postpaid.

: : : Vintage recordings and broadcast performances by Bing Crosby, Gene Austin, Al Bowlly, Nick Lucas, Dick Powell, Fred Astaire & others are available also on reel tapes and cassettes.

A d d r e s s o r d e r s t o :

NARD, Box 298, STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK 10314

SHEET MUSIC

Mint condition sheet music collection dated from the turn of the century through the early 40's, including that of Judy Garland and a large amount of Bing Crosby's material. Serious collectors offering collection value only. Contact: Danny Taitch, 7208 E. Bridgeport, Spokane, Wash. 99206.

RECORDS

Crosby out-of-print LPs available for trade. Advise of wants & trade items. Dave Rapp, 931 Decker Lane, Warminster, Pa. 18974.

SNAPSHOTS

Order by number from Rena Albanesi, 54 Quinsey Dr., Bridgeport, Conn. 06606.

1028 - Bing, Boswell Sisters (1932)

1029 - Bing & Grace Kelly in "Country Girl"

1030 - Bing alone during rehearsal of TV show

1031 - Bing and Kathryn

1032 - Bing & Sandy Duncan - TV show

1033 - Bing, Bob Hope - TV show

1034 - Bing, Sandy Duncan, Pearl Bailey, Bob Hope - TV show

FLASH - Last Minute Recording News - Thanks to member, Les Gaylor, for permission to include this letter from Ken Baines, producer of Bing's upcoming new album.

Sussex Place,
London W6 9DY.

Dear Les,

We just got back a couple of days ago and what with catching up on unfinished work and overcoming the dreaded "jet lag blues", I thought I'd better wait until my head was clear before writing to you with all the facts.

First of all, I have to tell you that the trip was a complete success. Professionally, Bing is a joy to work with. And contrary to what I was led to believe, he is a hard and conscientious worker. Someone I know who had worked with him on previous occasions told me that he would never do more than three takes of a song. Be that as it may - all I know is that on our session, which took place on the morning of October 17 at Johnny Mercer's own studio, Heritage Studio in Burbank, Bing worked hard for almost five hours on just two songs. He and Johnny were in great form. Two great jazz singers showing everyone that experience is still the best teacher. Our young recording engineer, Tom Oliver - who is more accustomed to recording rock groups like Steppinwolf, etc. - was full of admiration for the way Bing and John worked together. His mother, he told me, was a Crosby fan from way back and it was her birthday the following day. Bing obliged by signing a birthday card for Mrs Oliver.

The session was a special affair in more ways than one. Since Johnny Mercer arrived back in Hollywood two months ago, many famous people have been asking him to write for them - notably Jule Styne, who wanted John to write a new musical with him; Paul McCartney, who wanted to write some pop songs with Mercer lyrics; and Frank Sinatra, who wanted Johnny to write some new songs for his next LP. All of these people were politely turned down. The only work that Johnny wanted to do was to write some special new lyrics and sing them with Bing. The only sad note connected with the session was that Johnny's wife, Ginger, had gone into hospital for an operation just a few days before the session. I don't think Bing was told about this - and Johnny's concern for his wife certainly didn't show in his performance. He sounded as bright and breezy as ever. Fortunately Mrs. M. pulled through the operation and is now on the road to recovery. But I can tell you that Johnny was very worried about her (they have been married for 43 years. Bing told me that he used to date Ginger before she even met John). I was half expecting Johnny to cancel out on the session, but

he just couldn't let us down.

As for Bing, any doubts we may have had about the condition of his voice following the operation earlier this year were dispelled as soon as we heard him sing. Firstly the TV show of October 9 revealed that his sustaining power was better than it had been on records of the last few years. Secondly, the first of our routining sessions which took place at his home gave an even stronger indication of his vocal potential as far as this new album project is concerned.

What Pete and I were most concerned about was Bing's range which, on certain records we had heard, suggested that he had lost much of his power in the upper register. If this was true, the operation seems to have rectified it. As far as I can tell, Bing's range seems to have expanded by at least a full note at the top of his register. His most comfortable top note is really B flat, but during our rehearsal sessions he was hitting C with apparent ease and even nudging up to D without too much strain. Also his tone is much rounder than on records of the last few years. He sounds more like he used to back in the 1940s.

But the most remarkable thing of all was the suprising volume of his voice during these rehearsal sessions. His voice actually sounded much bigger in person than it appears on record. So I made a note of this when it came to recording him with Mercer. Instead of using the usual intimate filter mike that, I am sure, most producers use when they record singers, I decided to put Bing on an AKG ~~XXXX~~ omni-directional mike (the kind one would use to record trumpets or trombones). This meant that he would have to stand much further away from the mike itself in ~~back~~^{order} for the sound to be properly absorbed. I'm happy to say the experiment paid off. Bing now sounds as he should.

The people at United Artists who have heard the tracks are wildly delighted at the results. They say Bing sounds better than he has for years. There is no question that he is certainly singing better....from a stylistic as well as vocal standpoint. It seems to me that he is paying far more attention the words these days.

On the session, Bing put a proposition to me. He said that he would like to make a further album with Pete and myself - a collection of some of his favourite Broadway songs. I said I would have to check with the London office to see if the finances were available for a second album. London gave me an immediate go-ahead. So, you'll be glad to know that Bing will now be making two LPs for United Artists. So much for the good news - now for the bad

news. Bing is not sure that he wants to come to England to record the albums. So, first of all, the sessions for November have had to be cancelled. Bing's first objection was that it was hardly worth coming over to simply record a dozen songs. He then suggested that if a second LP were to be made at the same time, this might make the journey a little more worth while. So I got permission to do a second LP and Bing is now thinking about coming over around the end of January or beginning of February. If not we will have to record the backgrounds here in London and I will have to fly to California and put Bing's vocals down over the tracks. Artistically, this is not a satisfying way to record an album - it is even more of a pity when one considers what fine shape the Crosby voice is in these days. But if all else fails, it will work mechanically at least. To be fair to Bing, I know he realises the shortcomings of such an operation and he has promised me that he will give the London trip some serious thought.

If he does come over to London, both Pete and myself are confident that it will result in his best albums for years.

As for the repertoire in the first album, the following titles have been selected and are now being orchestrated.

Album title THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT

The title song is a Les Reed melody, which had an original lyric by Peter Dacre (of the Sunday Express). Some of the lyric wasn't suitable for Bing so I re-wrote about two thirds of it. When Bing first looked at the song he liked it right away but was critical of one or two lines in the lyric and proceeded to re-write some of the song. We think it's got a great chance to be another "My Way" and generally speaking it is in much better taste. The song is ideally suited to Bing's personality and image. I think it will be a big hit.

Remaining songs:

No Time at All (Schwartz), Best Things in Life are Free (De Sylva, Brown & Henderson), Bon Vivant (Mercer, Dolan), Breezing Along With the Breeze (Whiting, Simons, Gillespie), Some Sunny Day (Berlin), The Good Old Times (Moore, Barnes), Razzle Dazzle (Kander, Ebb), I Love to Dance Like They Used to Dance (Goldenberg, M & A Bergman) Have a Nice Day (Hoyt Axton) -the latter is not to be confused with the Nistico, Mercer song on "Bing'n'Basie - .

Add to these the two duets with Johnny Mercer

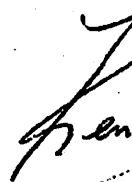
The Pleasure of Your Company & Good Companions (both by Previn & Mercer). The last two have already been recorded with piano, bass

and drums only. Full orchestra will be added when the remaining titles are recorded in London probably in late January.

Some seventeen songs have already been routined for the second album which will probably contain 12 or fourteen songs in its finished form. The final selection will be firmed up between Bing and myself in the next couple of letters.

And that's about all for now - except to say that I have been receiving lots of letters from members of ICC. Hopefully, I'll find time to reply to one each day. In the meantime, I hope you will find time to circulate the information in this letter to all your associates. I thank them all for their interest. But most especially, I am grateful to you, Les, for all your efforts and assistance in helping to get this project under way.

Best wishes and sincere regards,



Ken Barnes.

* * * * *

FRONT COVER: Joe Sinnett

Theme: "Let's Make it 50 Bing"/50 years of recording commercially.

The news of Bing's October recording session means that 1974 marks the 48th consecutive year that Bing has recorded commercially!

* * * * *

Dear Les,

Thanks for the two letters you wrote this week. I have been working solidly in the last 8 or 10 days in an effort to get my ~~commitments back on a normal footing - but I wouldn't have missed~~ the opportunity to record Bing for anything. If you could have seen the delighted looks on the faces of everyone in the U.A. office as they listened to the voice tracks of Bing and Johnny, you'd know what I was talking about.

The general opinion is that Bing is sounding better than at any time in the last ten years - not only is the voice warmer and richer, but it is more expressive and physically much stronger. I honestly think that if Bing is prepared to take a little time off and come to London and work as diligently as he did on the California session, he could make the whole industry sit up and take notice. Right now the commercial conditions could not be more in his favour. United Artists Records would like to mount a massive international campaign - hopefully based on his 50th Anniversary in show business. This, of course, will depend on Bing's sanction. His TV production people want to launch a series of celebration programmes complete with film clips and Bing singing and narrating his life story.

I must say that, along with the great box-office success of That's Entertainment plus the fact that Bing is now singing so well, there will never be a better time to do this. Bing said that his 50th Anniversary as a recording artist is not until 1976 - but in 1976 the campaign might be slightly overshadowed by the fact that America will be celebrating 200 years of Independence...1776 to 1976.

Right now, with Como so big in this country, U.A. honestly feel that they could Bing into the top ten and are fully prepared to back this Crosby product with full scale radio and dealer promotion.

And as if all that weren't enough, I have just had a call from Mr. John Fisher of the Parkinson-TV show with an offer to present Bing in a special programme built around the new LP, THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT complete with Pete Moore and the full orchestra plus - if he wants to make the trip - guest artist, Johnny Mercer. This TV contact, I know, came from your enthusiastic promotional efforts, but it seems to have grown to even greater proportions than any of us

had a full orchestra was Andy Williams. So here's a built-in opportunity for Bing to not only make a first class album, but to go on TV and plug it on the biggest rated show in the country. What a coup !

Now, as to your comments re. Some Sunny Day, I actually have the Bing With A Beat album and can promise you that the song will sound very different in the new setting which Pete is currently writing for it. It's a song that Bing dearly loves. So my feeling is that he ought to do it.

The Broadway LP is still being kicked around. We have thought about making it SONGS OF STAGE & SCREEN - but I actually prefer the Broadway concept. At the last routining session, Bing ran through about 18 songs - and Glocca Morra was among them at the suggestion of Pete Moore. Bing says he would like to do it. Anyway, here's the list:-

My Heart Stood Still, You Are Too Beautiful, Dancing on the Ceiling, Yours sincerely, How Are Things in Glocca Morra?, Something to Remember You By, Send in the Clowns.

Thou Swell, You Took Advantage of Me, With a Song in My Heart, I'll Never Fall in Love Again, Raindrops keep falling on My Head, Hello, Dolly, Cabaret, Looking at You, Just in Time, On a Clear Day you can See Forever, Great Day.

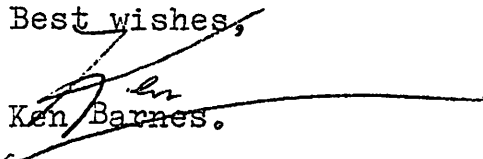
This may not be anything like the final list as the general package is still being kicked around - it may even become Bing Sings Rodgers & Hart. Do you know if there are any photos of Bing with Rodgers and Hart that were taken by Paramount at the time Mississippi was made ? If so, this would make a great shot to incorporate into the sleeve design.

Personally, I favour the Broadway idea. We could title it, THAT'S BROADWAY and design the sleeve in a similar way to That's Entertainment. United Artists also like this idea - but naturally we all want Bing to be happy in what he is doing.

We are all hoping he will make the trip over here in January. It will be worthwhile in so many different ways. Well, that's about all for now - must get back to work.

Thanks, once again, for your help on the Parkinson thing.

Best wishes,


Ken Barnes.



J. C.